

THE NATION

AND ATHENÆUM

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 24th, 1929.

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JOURNEY'S END.
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"THE SKIN GAME."

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NEXT WEEK'S DIARY.

MONDAY. "Q" Theatre. "Portrait of a Lady," with
 Angela Baddeley.
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 (Talkie), and Edgar Wallace's thriller, "The
 Ringer," including Leslie Faber in the Cast.
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 Piccadilly. "The Gambler," preceded by Vita-
 phone Variety.
 Coliseum. Franklyn Dyall in a tabloid thriller,
 "Chin Chin Chinaman."
THURSDAY. Stoll Picture Theatre. Lon Chaney in "Laugh,
 Clown, Laugh," a version of the Pagliacci
 "eternal triangle" theme; also Loretta Young,
 a new comer to the screen.

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AND ATHENÆUM



VOL. XLV.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 1929.

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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE position at The Hague has not sensibly improved during the last week, although the delegations and their expert staffs have been hard at work upon a projected agreement. On Thursday, August 15th, Mr. Snowden handed Mr. Jaspar an informal note in which he stated that he was still waiting for concrete proposals, and could not reasonably be expected to wait much longer. The four Powers presented a memorandum on the following day. In this rather rambling document they reasserted the principle that the Young Plan must be accepted or rejected as it stood, but claimed that consistently with the Plan, Great Britain might be made the recipient of considerable sums of unallotted money. These sums, it was said, would amount to a total not far from the additional annuity which Mr. Snowden demanded. The British reply to this memorandum was uncompromising; the proposals now put forward made no real concessions to the requirements to which Mr. Snowden intended to adhere: a larger share in the unconditional payments and a reapplication of the Spa percentages.

* * *

When the British reply had been received, Mr. Jaspar suggested, in a personal visit to Mr. Snowden, that the Memorandum should be examined by the Treasury experts of the interested Powers, and that they should present a joint report to the conference on the exact sums which would be paid to Great Britain if effect were given to the proposals in the memorandum. Mr. Snowden agreed to this, and the Treasury

experts finished their report late in the evening of Tuesday, August 20th. This document has not been published, but its principal contents have been divulged. According to the most reliable reports, even the French experts cannot make the additional sums which it is proposed should be paid to Great Britain amount in all to more than £850,000; that is to a million and a half less than Mr. Snowden claims. For the moment, the British Chancellor has withheld his usual statement of principle, and has attended a tea-party conference with M. Briand.

* * *

This highly unsatisfactory state of things has naturally given a set back to the negotiations for evacuating the Rhineland. M. Briand is now reported to have stated that the French evacuation will take far longer than was anticipated, and has raised technical difficulties of which he made no mention when the discussions began. It can be taken as certain that the French will not undertake to evacuate unless all financial questions are settled. More than that, M. Briand's sudden reservations suggest that he, personally, is not hopeful, and that Baron Adatchi's tea-party only served to show how serious are the existing divisions. The position, as we go to press, is made particularly critical by the fact that the Young Plan should come into force on September 1st. The time limit for an agreement is becoming dangerously short.

* * *

As the Anglo-American conversations on naval limitation have been the subject of rather irresponsible comment by some sections of the United States Press,

Mr. MacDonald has been well advised to issue an official bulletin. From his guarded statement it appears that the American and British Governments are now nearly agreed upon a definition of cruiser parity which satisfies both sides. It may also be inferred that the total cruiser tonnage agreed to by both countries will be lower than the cruiser tonnage at present possessed by Great Britain; that we are to have an agreement to reduce combatant tonnage as well as to equalize it. Nothing has been revealed about the much advertised yardstick, and Mr. MacDonald suggests that such matters should not be publicly discussed for the moment. In conclusion, Mr. MacDonald virtually states that the immediate issue of the conversations will be an invitation to all naval Powers to attend a new conference. The whole bulletin is worded with extreme caution, and ample loopholes are left for escape from any of its implications. The impression remains that important progress is being made.

The position in Manchuria has not improved during the past week. The rival armies are still being reinforced, and the zones they occupy are continually being raided by gangs of desperate men. Accusations, counter accusations, and wild rumours continue to circulate, and the tension is increasing.

On August 16th, an Arab crowd at Jerusalem invaded the passage in front of the Wailing Wall, the Holy Place of the Jews, put the worshippers to flight, assaulted the beadle, broke up the table used for the services, tore up Jewish prayer books and psalm books, and burnt them. The Palestine Government had allowed the Arab demonstration, and, although it was known that the Wailing Wall would be its objective, failed to provide adequate protection to prevent violence and sacrilege at a place which to Jews is as holy as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is to Christians, and the Mosque of Omar is to Moslems. What adds to the seriousness of their omission is that last year, on the Day of Atonement, the most sacred service of the Jewish religion at that most sacred place was violently interrupted by the police, sent by the British Governor of Jerusalem, to remove a screen which, in accordance with the Jewish ritual, was placed to separate the men from the women. To the Jews, this was an indignity which, they feel, would not have been inflicted by any responsible British administrator on a Bantu tribe in equatorial Africa worshipping Mumbo-Jumbo.

An official communiqué issued from Jerusalem places the Arab demonstration on a level with a Jewish demonstration which took place at the Wailing Wall on the preceding day, and concludes with the assurance that:—

"The Government are now investigating offences that may have been committed in the events of both days, with a view to ascertaining the possibility of identifying offenders for prosecution."

This is adding insult to injury, from the Jewish point of view. The Jewish demonstration, however ill-advised it may have been, was admittedly of a peaceful character. Its object was to protest against the line taken by the Palestinian Government with regard to Jewish rights at the Wailing Wall, and against the alleged weakness in the matter of the Zionist Organization. Nobody was assaulted; the Holy Place of another religion was not invaded; there was no sacrilege, and the Arabs were not attacked even in words. The attempt to assimilate the two demonstrations is there-

fore regarded as a sign of anything but impartiality on the part of the Administration. The Day of Atonement is again approaching, and unless the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner, who is now in England, can impress some of the officials on the spot with a different sense of their responsibilities, that day may be marred by incidents which will not redound to the credit of Britain.

After the Cotton employers had accepted the principle of arbitration, as we recorded last week, the negotiations went smoothly and rapidly. There was a general resumption of work in the mills on Monday, and the Board of Arbitration, consisting of Sir Rigby Swift, K.C., Chairman, Sir Arthur Balfour, Mr. C. T. Cramp, Sir Archibald Ross, and Mr. A. G. Walkden, M.P., met for the first time on Wednesday. The terms of reference are both wide and simple. The arbitrators are asked to examine the employers' claim for a 12½ per cent. reduction in wages and to decide "whether, and, if so, to what extent," the employers' claim is justified. Both sides are pledged to abide by the award.

The Minister of Health has issued this week a Vaccination Order to give effect to certain of the recommendations of the Committee which reported last year. The most important change is that in future a Public Vaccinator is instructed to vaccinate in one insertion only, unless there is some special reason for desiring to obtain additional protection against smallpox at one operation. As a corollary to this provision, Public Vaccinators are authorized to revaccinate any person who applies to them, without reference to the period which has elapsed since the last vaccination. (Hitherto revaccination at the public expense has been restricted to those persons who have not been vaccinated within the previous ten years.) Further, parents are informed that if, in consequence of vaccination, a child requires medical attention, it is the duty of the Public Vaccinator concerned to provide such attention without cost to the parents.

A circular issued with the Vaccination Order to Boards of Guardians is of greater interest and importance than the Order itself. In this circular, the Minister of Health states that "post-vaccinal nervous disease," both in this country and abroad, has occurred mainly in children of school age or adolescents who had never previously been vaccinated, and that this fact emphasizes the desirability of securing the successful vaccination of infants. This is a statement which has frequently been made, but it is not borne out, as we remarked at the time, by the statistics of deaths attributed to vaccination, in the early months of this year, given by Mr. Greenwood himself in answer to a Parliamentary question a few weeks ago. From those figures it appeared that persons of all ages, including infants, had indiscriminately succumbed. Many parents will, however, be grateful to the Minister of Health for his further statement that, in the present state of knowledge, and so long as the smallpox prevalent in this country retains its present mild character, it is not generally expedient to press for the vaccination of children of school age or adolescents who have not previously been vaccinated, unless they have been in personal contact with a case of smallpox or directly exposed to smallpox infection. This is an authoritative opinion which should carry great weight with those schools which still impose compulsory vaccination upon their entrants.

The new Agricultural Marketing Act, under which the United States Government puts a sum of £100,000,000 at the disposal of a Federal Farm Board, created by the Act, reads almost like a manifesto. It opens with a "Declaration of Policy," in which it is "enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives . . . that it is hereby declared to be the policy of Congress to promote the effective merchandizing of agricultural commodities in interstate and foreign commerce, so that the industry of agriculture will be placed on a basis of economic equality with other industries." The purpose of the Act is further defined as being to protect, control, and stabilize the currents of interstate and foreign commerce in the marketing of agricultural commodities and their food products, mainly by promoting the establishment and financing of "a farm marketing system of producer-owned and producer-controlled co-operative associations" and other agencies. The appropriation is to be a revolving fund to be used for making loans to these associations at a rate of interest based upon the lowest rate of yield of any Government obligation, but the rate in no case is to exceed 4 per cent. Loans will be available for all marketing requirements, including the construction or purchase of "physical facilities," for which 80 per cent. of their estimated value may be advanced.

* * *

In a country where we are concerned (or ought to be) with the encouragement of greater agricultural production, we have had no such gesture from our agricultural authorities. The strange fact of the matter is, however, that this American Act is not designed for the purpose which a similar declaration of policy might be expected to serve here, but, on the contrary, it is intended as a measure to assist in dealing with surplus production, which is to-day the most serious domestic problem of American agriculture. It is specified that a part of the declared policy is to aid "in preventing and controlling surpluses in any agricultural commodity through orderly production and distribution." The Federal Farm Board is to act only in such manner as will conform with this purpose, but it is not given the power to dispose of surpluses which was contemplated by the McNary-Haugen Bill, and is still demanded by a large body of farmer opinion. Disposal is apparently to be accomplished by "stabilization corporations" which will be helped in the control of any surplus by receiving loans on the same terms as those made to co-operative associations. In particular the Act is intended to do for the American wheat growers what the Canadian growers have done for themselves by their pools.

* * *

Among the suggestions put forward by the Four Powers to meet Mr. Snowden's demands is the retention by Great Britain of the balance of the proceeds of the sale of German private property in British territory remaining over after the satisfaction of admitted British claims. This suggestion is surprising when it is remembered that some at least of the States by which it is made have themselves released, or agreed to release, similar surpluses held by them. The whole question of liquidated German property in this country requires clearing up, as a correspondent points out on another page of this issue, but the short cut proposed by the Four Powers is not a satisfactory method to adopt. The amount at issue is approximately £15 millions, which may be slightly reduced by the settlement of a few outstanding claims. The Versailles Treaty required Germany to compensate her nationals for the loss of their expropriated property, but in fact

they have received on the average less than 10 per cent. compensation, and there is a widespread feeling that the terms of the Treaty provide insufficient justification for the confiscation of private property without adequate compensation.

* * *

The Permanent Court of International Justice has given a decision this week in a curious dispute between France and Switzerland. By the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna it was stipulated that the French territory which almost surrounds Geneva should be a free trade area, and for a hundred years France has in fact maintained her tariff wall well within her own territory, leaving what are known as the Free Zones of Haute Savoie and the Pays de Gex to trade freely with their natural centre at Geneva. After the Great War, however, France decided that this arrangement was no longer consistent with modern conditions, and an Article was inserted in the Treaty of Versailles to that effect and declaring that France and Switzerland should come to an agreement together with a view to settling between themselves the status of these territories. So far so good, but Switzerland was not a party to the Versailles Treaty, and did not agree that the stipulations were inappropriate to present conditions. Nevertheless, in 1923 France moved her tariff wall much nearer to Switzerland, to the great detriment of trade in that area. Switzerland naturally protested, and, after a prolonged dispute, the question was referred to the Permanent Court. The Court has now decided by nine votes to three that Switzerland is not bound by a Treaty to which she was not a party, and that the Vienna Treaty still holds good so far as the Free Zones are concerned.

* * *

The civil war in Afghanistan continues with unabated fury, and none of the rival parties seems to be gathering the additional strength necessary for forcing a decision. The forces of the Ameer Habibullah do, however, appear to have suffered a check at the hands of some wild tribesmen who celebrated their victory by boiling the most eminent of their prisoners in oil. But this check or set back has not loosened the Ameer's hold on Kabul and the surrounding districts. Until he can be dislodged, the civil war will continue without sensible advantage to either side. The only hopeful feature of the situation is that Nadir Khan, though not successful, is still undefeated; for he is by far the wisest and the ablest of all the rival aspirants for power. His attempt to influence public opinion by publishing a cyclostyle paper, in which he alleges that nothing but correct news will be allowed to appear, is highly praiseworthy in the circumstances.

* * *

The British and Indian officials in the Indus valley are to be congratulated on their precautions against a danger which might have obliterated entire populations. On Saturday, August 17th, a natural ice barrier in the Karakoram range burst and released an enormous mass of water through the Shiok river into the upper Indus. The flood waters now moved down stream like a tidal wave. News of the disaster was first transmitted down stream on Sunday, when river watchers began to report abnormal readings on the gauges. The commissioners on the middle and lower river managed to warn all the threatened villages by aeroplane, and according to the latest reports, no lives have been lost. It cannot be doubted, however, that an enormous amount of property has been destroyed, and that relief will have to be very promptly provided for the most afflicted districts.

THE STRUGGLE AT THE HAGUE

THE fate of The Hague Conference hangs as precariously in the balance this week as it did a week ago. The fact that it has survived so long may be regarded as a hopeful sign; it shows, at least, a general reluctance to accept responsibility for breaking it up. On the other hand, it cannot be allowed to drag on much longer. Mr. Henderson and M. Briand are wanted at Geneva next week for a League Council meeting, preparatory to the Assembly, and, as Herr Stresemann has pointed out, Germany must be told whether the Young Plan is to supersede the Dawes Plan in respect of the payments due on September 1st. A decision must be reached soon, if it is only a decision to decide nothing.

It cannot be said that any real progress has been made in the work of the Financial Committee. The other large creditor States have made an offer to Britain the effect of which would be to leave the Young Plan intact, but to give us the benefit of certain surpluses which remain unallocated by the Young Committee. This device would involve no sacrifice on the part of the four Powers who put it forward, but it would absorb the only remaining pool from which the smaller creditors hope to derive some benefit. It has been feverishly examined by the Treasury experts of Great Britain and the four Powers, aided by calculating machines, but they have been unable to reach agreement as to whether it amounts to 40 per cent. or only 20 per cent. of the British claim. In either case it cannot be regarded as satisfactory, and some real concession by France and Italy is urgently needed.

Meanwhile, the Political Committee has made excellent progress. Mr. Henderson has definitely announced that the British troops now in the Rhineland will eat their Christmas dinners in England. The Belgians seem genuinely anxious to follow suit, and M. Briand has indicated that—subject always to a settlement on Reparations—the French troops will be withdrawn from the second zone this year, and from the third zone next year. Further, the idea of setting up a new “Committee of Conciliation and Verification” for the purpose of supervising the Rhineland until 1935, when the Treaty period of occupation comes to an end, seems to have been virtually abandoned. Any such committee could only be a source of irritation, since the League of Nations has already been made responsible for investigating any alleged infringement of the disarmament clauses of the Treaty, and there is ample machinery under the Covenant and the Locarno Treaties for arbitration and conciliation on any disputed points that may arise. These are matters of great moment, for it is essential to remove such vestiges of the war as armies of occupation if real progress is to be made towards security and disarmament. Mr. Henderson’s task at The Hague has been easier than Mr. Snowden’s, and it may very likely have been facilitated up to a point by the stand made by Mr. Snowden in the other Committee, but it is only fair to add that he has gone about it in a way well calculated to produce tangible progress. He cannot by any stretch of the imagination be said to have “truckled to the foreigner”; he has announced his own policy clearly and firmly, and he

has quietly brought pressure to bear on the French and Belgian delegates to keep in step with him. But he has not made exciting gestures, or violent speeches, or put his foot down with unusual vigour, or done any of the things which have roused the entire British Press to a frenzy of admiration for Mr. Snowden.

There is, indeed, something alarming in the way in which Mr. Snowden and the Press appear to be reacting on each other. The newspapers have not been so jingo and truculent in tone since the peace treaties were signed. Some of them, indeed, which have always stood for a policy of appeasement, are now so irritated by France and Italy that they seem to have forgotten the larger issues at stake. While others, which have consistently supported France in her demands upon Germany, are now divided between delight at Mr. Snowden’s assertion of British rights and uneasiness as to its effect on the Entente. But the reaction of Mr. Snowden to this encouragement, or perhaps to the abuse of the French and Italian Press, is even more disquieting. In an interview on Saturday he is reported to have said that the sum at issue was comparatively of no importance, and to have added:—

“The real reason is that England has been in recent years so very weak internationally that we feel that the time has now come for England to resume the position in international relations to which her position in the world entitles her. Other nations have been taking advantage of England’s weakness, but that has now come to an end.”

That is the kind of language which we associate with the names of Palmerston, Disraeli, and Joseph Chamberlain, in his later years. We should have expected Liberals and Labour Pacifists to be utterly out of sympathy with it. If Britain has been weak internationally, the remedy is for her statesmen now to be strong on the things that matter; to press, as Mr. Henderson is doing, for the speedy evacuation of the Rhineland; to come to terms with America as to naval armaments, as we hope and believe Mr. MacDonald will do; to be firm, if necessary, with France and Italy in order to bring them into such a compact, and to make the League of Nations the corner-stone of their European policy. It is by following a consistent course in such matters as these, and not by haggling about sums which are “comparatively of no importance,” that Britain will deserve the respect of other nations, and if she achieves these objects it matters very little whether she holds “the position in the world” to which she is entitled.

That Mr. Snowden should talk in that way confirms the fear which we expressed last week that he is not merely trying, as it is his business to do, to get the best possible terms for the British taxpayer, but that he is standing out fanatically for what he conceives to be a vital matter of principle. For our part, we doubt whether any real principle is involved, except that it is wrong to press Germany for more than she can reasonably pay. The Balfour Note laid down a sensible working compromise, that we should receive from our debtors as much as we had undertaken to pay to America, and this arrangement is safeguarded by the Young Plan so far as future payments are concerned. Mr. Snowden objects, of course, to the principle of the

Balfour Note, but on that his colleagues have made it clear that they do not agree with him. The most substantial point that he has brought against the Young Plan is that France gets too large a proportion of the unconditional annuities. This will only operate if Germany is unable to pay as much as £50 millions in any year. In that event, all her creditors will be badly hit, and we agree with Mr. Snowden that the sum salvaged should be distributed in the usual proportions. But even that is not so vital a matter as to be worth the sacrifice of all the political and financial interests involved in the Conference. The Young Plan is, after all, the product of a Committee on which Great Britain (though not the Government) was very ably represented. It is itself a compromise between conflicting national claims, and if the British experts conceded in the end rather more than the French and Italians, it was because they had a livelier sense of Germany's difficulties and of the international importance of framing a workable scheme. There would be no intolerable hardship in accepting the Young Plan as it stands.

To avoid any misconception, however, let us repeat that, in our judgment, Mr. Snowden is right in pressing for further concessions. We do not regard the points he has raised as negligible, but if he were urging them for their financial value alone, we should feel confident that he would not go the length of wrecking the Conference in order to secure them. It is when he begins to talk about Britain's "position in the world" that Mr. Snowden becomes dangerous. By doing so he runs the risk of raising nationalist passions both at home and abroad, and of stiffening the backs of all parties at the Conference.

It has been suggested in some quarters that it will not greatly matter if The Hague Conference breaks down, since Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Henderson will be meeting the representatives of the other participating States at Geneva and they can then settle the questions at issue, without the disturbing presence of Mr. Snowden. This seems to us to be an extremely risky calculation. In the first place, failure at The Hague would mean ruffled tempers at Geneva and a bad atmosphere in which to recommence negotiations. It would be unwise to expect the other British Ministers to obtain concessions which had so recently been refused to Mr. Snowden. In the second place, the feeling already aroused in this country would be still further inflamed by a breakdown of the Conference, and it would be impossible in those circumstances for the Prime Minister to concede anything that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had refused. To do so would seriously endanger the Government. It is only reasonable, therefore, to assume that a failure at The Hague would mean the abandonment of the Young Plan, the postponement of the French evacuation of the Rhineland, a serious check to Mr. MacDonald's disarmament plans, and a more or less prolonged period of confusion in international affairs. These considerations must be present in the minds of the British Cabinet, and it is therefore difficult to believe that the Conference will be allowed to fail.

SAFETY OF THE ROADS

THAT traffic dangers constitute a social problem of the first magnitude is becoming increasingly realized, though the knowledge that, out of every thousand persons who die during the year, ten are killed in a motor accident, may still come as a shock to responsibly minded people. During the year 1928, over 6,000 street accidents involving fatal consequences were recorded in Great Britain, of which over 5,200 were motor accidents. In addition to this appalling total of fatalities, there were over 140,000 accidents (including 106,000 motor accidents) involving personal injury. The growth of these figures has steadily kept pace with the growth of the motor-car industry. In 1919 the total number of accidents recorded was only 26,000, of which just over 1,000 were fatal. By 1921 (when there were 870,000 motor vehicles on the roads) the total had risen to 62,000. 1925 saw 115,000 accidents (just under 4,000 of them fatal), and 1,500,000 cars on the roads. By 1928—with its total, analyzed above, of 147,000 accidents—there were over 2,000,000 motor vehicles on the roads.

In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that the Royal Commission on Transport (appointed just a year ago) should have decided to deal *seriatim* with the various important questions included in its terms of reference, and to tackle first of all what is clearly the most urgent: the question of public safety. Its activities in this direction were stimulated by the introduction into the House of Lords, in November of last year, of the controversial and somewhat "cranky" Bill, dealing with the regulation of road vehicles, of which Lord Cecil was the sponsor. The Commission has now issued a First Report (Cmd. 3365) on the Control of Traffic on Roads, which is well worth perusal; for it is earnestly to be hoped that many of its recommendations will soon find embodiment in legislation. Included among the topics with which the Report deals are many which have long agitated public opinion. Of these the most important are: (1) the speed limit; (2) penalties for reckless driving; (3) compulsory insurance; (4) the regulation of driving licences. Other questions with which the Report deals—e.g., road signs, the establishment of a "code of customs" for the roads, &c.—are important; but these, in this brief survey of the Commission's proposals, it will not be possible to discuss.

Turning first to the question of the speed limit, it is, of course, common knowledge that the present law on the subject is obsolete and is universally ignored. Side by side with the statutory speed limit of twenty miles per hour, we have public vehicles plying for hire—and licensed by local authorities to do so—at advertised speeds of from thirty to forty miles per hour; while cars are daily advertised for use on public roads which are built to travel at seventy miles per hour and upwards. The present undesirable state of affairs is, in part, a direct consequence of these anomalies. Those responsible for the enforcement of the law, conscious that it has long been a dead letter, administer its provisions according to the dictates of their own consciences; now conniving—in the absence of definite guidance—at practices that ought to be severely punished; now imposing vexatious punishments in respect of venial offences. In consequence, the law has been brought into disrepute, while a swelling tide of dissatisfaction with its provisions makes its administration unnecessarily difficult.

The Commission has recommended—as was generally expected—the abolition of the speed limit, save for certain classes of vehicles, i.e., locomotives, goods vehicles, omnibuses, and charabanes. It points out, with justice, that it is not to excessive speed, but to careless driving—perhaps

at quite low speeds—that accidents are primarily due; and that the imposition of a speed limit, for the ordinary motorist, may actually work out to the public detriment, since it obtrudes a criterion of illegality which is not the most relevant to the matter at issue. At the same time, speed limits are rightly suggested for the various classes of vehicles mentioned above, since here other considerations must be taken into account: the special responsibilities of omnibuses, &c., towards their clients, and the wear and tear upon the roads inflicted by heavy vehicles.

The crux of the whole problem is, of course, the prevention of dangerous driving, and legislation with regard to speed limits cannot be separated from the revision of the existing criminal code in respect of driving offences. It will be generally agreed that, as things stand, quite inadequate penalties are imposed for offences that ought to be very severely dealt with, if the annual death roll of road accidents is to be substantially reduced. The discovery of suitable penalties, however, is not easy, since, if such penalties are made too drastic, the law will lend itself to abuse in just the same way as does the existing law concerning the speed limit. Some Benches would be loath to resort to severe penalties save on the clearest evidence, with the result that offenders would often go scot free; others might be tempted to apply these same penalties harshly or vindictively. The Ministry of Transport proposes (in its draft Road Traffic Bill) to increase the penalties for dangerous driving by raising the maximum fines exigible to £50 in the case of a first offence and £100 in the case of a second or subsequent offence, with imprisonment as an alternative, and with discretionary power, vested in the Court, to suspend the driver's licence. The Commission approves of these suggestions, but considers that the suspension of the licence should be automatic and not discretionary. In connection with these proposals it is perhaps worth while to offer two further suggestions. The first is that the suggested maxima for fines may well be regarded as "class legislation," since a fine of £50—a flea-bite to the millionaire road-hog—might cripple a small car owner for a year. Would not this be an excellent field in which to introduce the principle of "day-fines," which finds expression in the juridical codes of some Scandinavian countries? The defendant is fined so many days' income, calculated according to definite administrative rules. There would be a real deterrent here to many of those luxury car users who have hitherto been inclined to regard with contempt the whole code of traffic legislation. The second possibility that suggests itself is that special tribunals might be constituted whose duty it would be to review automatically the administration of the traffic laws by local benches of magistrates.

In regard to the issue of driving licences, the attitude of the Commission seems timid. The present state of affairs, which permits a blind person or a total cripple to obtain a driving licence, ought not to be perpetuated, and the Commission's recommendation that "every applicant for a driving licence should be required to make a declaration as to his physical fitness" seems hardly to meet the case. It is doubtless true—as the various motor-using bodies have urged—that the institution of tests for drivers would not of itself prevent accidents; at the same time, no convincing objection to the imposition of such tests seems to have been brought forward.

Finally, the Commission reports—and in so reporting it will be strongly backed by public opinion—that "the case for compulsory third-party-risk insurance is so strong that an attempt must be made to deal with it." The objection to compulsory insurance against third-party risks, put forward by the motor-users' associations, appears to

be that it will add considerably to the cost of insurance. But there seems no reason why it should not, in fact, work out the other way. If its effect were to stimulate among motor-users a demand for policies which discriminated against bad and inexperienced drivers, the cost of insurance might well be reduced and the level of driving capacity raised. This, at any rate, seems to be the Commission's view; and it is now up to the Ministry of Transport to produce a practicable scheme.

ACROSS ROUMANIA

"SO here we go over the edge of the world," we said, as we zig-zagged up the Predeal Pass from the northern side, towards the Carpathian watershed which, before the War, had marked the frontier between Hungary and Roumania. At the Austro-Hungarian frontier we had cast off our first moorings from the world we knew. We felt it when we encountered the Hungarian military post. (On the Austrian side there was no military post, but just a Customs officer who had learnt to speak English in a night-school at Vienna.) We felt it still more when we crossed the west frontier, this time from Hungary into Roumania; for here there were not only soldiers on both sides, but barriers across the road, like the barriers at level crossings, only a few hundred yards apart. Again we felt the Western World fast ebbing away when, half an hour later, we were marketing for our mid-day picnic in the first town on the Roumanian side, Oradea Mare—or should I say Nagy Varad, or should I say Grosswardein? Which should I say? For this question is neither rhetorical nor academic in East-European territories that have changed hands since the War.

In the first village after crossing the Roumanian frontier I asked for Nagy Varad; for I knew that the people here were still Magyars, and it seemed churlish to rub in the fact that they were now under-dog by asking them the way in Roumanian. But I have made an error; for, as the Magyar words Nagy Varad "escape the barrier of my teeth," I realize that this corner house where the roads fork is the village police-station. A look of bland non-comprehension settles down over the face of the Roumanian gendarme who leans out of the window. "Nagy Varad?" He shakes his head. "Oradea," I shout, as the car creeps ambiguously towards the divide. He points to the right and smiles. When you are driving round curly roads with chickens scuttling under your wheels and rather few sign-posts, it is not at all easy to divine impromptu whether Magyar or German or Roumanian is the language in which the casual passer-by will insist upon being addressed. In this strange limbo between two worlds, there is a good deal of politics in asking the way.

Our first combat with "political analphabetism," if I may coin the term, was in the market-town of Cegled, between the Danube and the Theiss, in the heart of the Hungarian plain. The distilled water in our battery was uncomfortably low, so we crawled round the town till a neat little chemist's shop came in sight. "Guten Tag," I said as I entered "wir suchen destilliertes wasser für die Maschine." Affably but decidedly the chemist refused me in Magyar; and I understood exactly what he said, though I then knew no more than two words "right" and "left" of that Ural-Altaic tongue. "We don't talk German here," he said; "if you want to make purchases here you must learn to speak Magyar." A nationalism that inspires business-men to refuse business is impressive—but what was to be done? Must we go forward dumbly across the great Hungarian plain until our battery struck

work? By divine guidance, I had bought at Vienna a thumb-nail German-Magyar dictionary; and armed with this I entered the shop again. This time, no word of the prohibited language passed my lips. I simply pointed: "Destillieren—leparol," "Wesser-Visz"—and to my amazement and relief, I found that the victory was won. The obstinate expression died out of the Magyar chemist's face, and fluent German began to issue from his lips. So we had come all the way from England? Certainly he had distilled water. In a moment our battery was replenished; and we even heard "Glückliche Reise" shouted after us as we started up and sailed on. The patriot had succeeded in doubling our Magyar vocabulary, so he could afford to talk German to us now.

So here we are in the confusion of tongues. In the market-place at Oradea the *lingua franca* is German, or rather Yiddish, and the Jew who sells us the bread has lived many years in Whitechapel. "What brought you back?" we ask. "O, I just came back for a holiday, and then I married—" The aposiopesis was eloquent to us, but not to the breadseller's wife. She was standing at his elbow, but English was Greek to her.

More and more the West faded away during the next three days, when we were crossing Transylvania. On the first day we plunged in among the hills and slept at Klausenburg—a German town that is German still, though Magyars call it Kolozsevar and Roumanians, Cluj. The next night we slept at Hermanstadt, which was visibly turning into Sibin; the next at Kronstadt, which had quite become Brasov. Brasov looks out over a high, flat, triangular plain, with the two arms of the Carpathians bounding the sides and the Ghost Mountains for hypotenuse. If ever there was a world's end, that angle where the two Carpathians met looked like it; and all history confirmed the impression. Beyond that wall of mountains the Cæsarea Majestas of the Hapsburgs had ceased to prevail, and the dominion of the Ottoman Sultan-Caliphe had begun. . . .

Such thoughts were in our minds as we went zig-zagging up the northern side of the Predeal Pass. Well, anyway, it is not so steep as that zigzag over the Black Forest between Kehl and Freudenburg. And then, before we knew it, we were at the summit and found ourselves automatically drawing up at the entrance to a café-restaurant. . . .

Cafés and restaurants pullulated as we descended from the summit to the mountain-resort of Sinaia; and where the pleasure-resorts ceased the oil-fields began; and beyond the oil-fields the refineries; and in Bucarest more traffic than we had met anywhere since leaving Germany—a real throng of cars. . . .

So this is old Roumania. We had imagined that we were passing out of Europe into the Near East, but instead of that we seem to have been transported on some magic carpet from Central Europe into one of the "A B C" States of South America. At least, this is what I imagine the Argentine to be like: Latin and Southern and flat and bustling and wealthy. The city is a more attractive version of Modern Athens—with an air of having grown naturally (the Calca Victoriei is pleasantly winding and narrow) instead of having been laid out all at once. There are the same palaces of millionaires. But the Athenian millionaires have made their fortunes in Alexandria or Trieste or Liverpool, while the Roumanian millionaires have assuredly made theirs in Roumania itself.

No, this is not the strange world of which Transylvania was the threshold. Shall we find the Near East in Bulgaria when we take the ferry across the Danube tomorrow? Or in Turkey at our journey's end? I suspect

that I shall hardly recognize the Turkey that I knew half a dozen years ago.

ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE.

PHILIP SNOWDEN

NOT since Lord Beaconsfield startled the diplomats at the Berlin Congress more than half a century ago with "terribly firm language" and a reminder that his train was waiting, has any British statesman at an international gathering gained such widespread personal popularity with his own countrymen as Mr. Philip Snowden at The Hague. It is true to say that the psychological hour has struck, and with it has come the man. Mr. Snowden represents a phase of British public opinion; the overwrought taxpayer, who has been holding the war debts "baby" so long and with such an air of quiet resignation, is at last growing weary of a task which seems to earn him no gratitude. Sir Austen Chamberlain may "love France like a woman," but women have been known to be deceivers. What the public required was a diplomatic "he-man"—a man armed with a big stick and a ready command of rough stuff to tame the shrew of the Quai d'Orsay! Mr. Snowden has shown himself to be the cave man Chancellor. Lord Morley once said there was nothing so dangerous as a "Jacobin turned Jingo," and although no one can fairly apply the latter epithet to Mr. Snowden, he has undoubtedly made a strong appeal to the 100 per cent. Britishers who sigh for the days of a jaunty Palmerston who will stand no nonsense from the foreigner.

It was said of Mr. Snowden that he would have to play a "lone hand" at The Hague, but anyone who has any knowledge of Mr. Snowden and his career would not expect him to be daunted by that. There is no statesman in our public life to-day who has passed through so stern a school of political adversity.

It is nearly thirty years ago since he made a stormful entry into public life, and he has had to fight every inch of the way. The guns were going off in South Africa and war passions were raging fiercely at home, when a small, pale, thin-lipped man—Cardinal Manning over again some people said—descended on Blackburn bearing a banner which in those days was of strange device. It was Philip Snowden, the apostle of Socialism and Peace. He leant heavily on a stick, and his face was twisted with pain. He had only recently come from a sick bed, on which he had been laid up for a year as the result of a cycling accident, and it was during this period of enforced leisure that he had mastered the contents of Socialist text-books and became a passionate convert. He brought to politics something of the emotional quality of religion. The weavers of Blackburn crowded to his meetings, held by the spell of his oratory, and although he had no party organization to help him and no party funds, and was the representative of a party which then seemed to consist of a few wild voices crying in the wilderness, he put up a fierce and memorable fight. For twenty years Blackburn had been a Tory seat, but he made the citadel rock to its foundations. He was defeated, but he sowed the seeds of victory.

Six years passed and Philip Snowden came to Westminster with forty Labour members to swell the ranks of the big Liberal battalions that marched to triumph under "C.-B."

"Members became aware of a 'seagreen incorruptible' speaking on the Address," says Mr. H. G. Wells in "The New Machiavelli," "a slender, twisted figure supporting itself on a stick and speaking with a fire that was

altogether revolutionary. It was Mr. Philip Snowden, the member for Blackburn."

Mr. Snowden was a lonely and not very effective Parliamentary figure in those days. He preached the hot gospel of Socialism in cold and bitter language. He was not regarded as a practical politician in the same way as Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. He was an uncompromising embodiment of social unrest; he was the man with the single track mind. He stood then where Mr. Maxton stands to-day—the unyielding theorist and master of formula—the Robespierre of the coming Revolution. In the days of Liberal-Labour co-operation, Mr. Snowden would have none of Liberalism. He was returned largely by Liberal votes in Blackburn, but he gave no recognition of the fact, and made no attempt to conciliate his Liberal supporters. He was, however, listened to with growing attention in the 1906 Parliament, and was one of the few men who by his handling of figures could make out a plausible case for Socialism. His grasp of economic questions and his sombre eloquence is said to have exercised a fascination over Mr. Balfour.

When the war broke out, Mr. Snowden took his stand behind Mr. MacDonald's declaration on August 3rd, 1914, after listening to Sir Edward Grey's speech, "I think history will show that he is wrong." Mr. Snowden became the second political villain of the piece in the eyes of his countrymen, with the present Prime Minister in the first rôle. His meetings were broken up and there were times when he went in peril of his life. To the great majority of his countrymen he was merely a name—a name to be anathematized. And then, in 1918, the electors of Blackburn turned against him and by an enormous majority thrust him into the outer darkness.

A few more years passed and Mr. Snowden suddenly reappeared at Westminster. A curious phenomenon was observed. He delivered a speech which was a powerful plea for constitutional Socialism and a strong denunciation of Bolshevism. The speech was so well reasoned and so unexpectedly moderate in tone that it was applauded by Conservative members, and there were shouts of "Go on" when he showed signs of resuming his seat. It was true he was still a Socialist, and he imposed a sort of test on his party by initiating an academic debate on Socialism which brought the rank and file of the Labour Party into the division lobby in support of the public ownership of the means of "production, distribution, and exchange," but he soon showed signs of returning to the Radical faith in which he was brought up.

His experience at the Treasury confirmed him in his new orientation. His natural aptitude for finance made the Treasury his element. There was no question about his understanding the "damn dots." The roar of cheering which greeted him on resuming his seat after introducing his first Budget was a tribute not only to the financial proposals which he had submitted, but to his skill in exposition. Philip Snowden, the "stern and unbending" Socialist had served up something resembling John Bright's Free Breakfast Table, and a few months later he came as the guest of honour to a banquet given by the Cobden Club. During his period as Chancellor, Mr. Snowden kept a firm grip on the public purse strings. When members of his party pressed for a redemption of some of their election pledges given to ex-ranker officers and Civil Service pensioners, they found the way to the Treasury coffers barred by a resolute janitor animated by orthodox Gladstonian traditions of public retrenchment.

In Opposition, Mr. Snowden proved himself to be the most forceful debater on his side. He was frequently matched against Mr. Churchill, and although he has not

the same dazzling rhetorical gifts, as he himself once modestly admitted, there is no sense of intellectual inequality in the dialectical duels between the two men. His language is as clear as crystal, and there is a ring of steel in his voice. The effect of his acid sentences is accentuated by the slow deliberate articulation of his words. In Parliament, I have often heard him hiss out such words as "grotesque," "ridiculous," and "contemptible," which so wounded the feelings of poor M. Chéron. Mr. Churchill, who was frequently the target for this invective, would lean back his head and smile. When attacked over one of his financial proposals, Mr. Churchill once caused great merriment by remarking, "I wonder what the Right Hon. Gentleman would say if he were confronted with a real fiscal outrage with a bankrupt vocabulary."

Mr. Snowden gives the impression of being a kindly man notwithstanding his splenetic phrases. He will project his envenomed darts with a wistful and disarming smile. He once told a story of how when he was a Civil Servant in the Excise, a lady lodged a complaint against him for incivility. He pleaded in defence that he had never said a word. "No," replied the lady, "that was the worst of it, but you looked it."

There is a certain element of the burlesque in Mr. Snowden's invective. There is a kind of Eatanswill emphasis which is well understood at Westminster, but is not yet properly appreciated in the European Chancelleries where the dagger of deadly purpose is often concealed beneath the voluminous cloak of euphemistic and floriferous language. If Mr. Snowden attends a few more international gatherings, M. Chéron, "Pertinax," Jules Saurwein, and other excitable Frenchmen, may become a little less sensitive and diplomacy a little more real.

WALTER P. POLEY.

LIFE AND POLITICS

AT the time this is written, The Hague Conference is still in a condition of suspended animation—that is to say, nothing of the least importance has happened since our "Iron Chancellor" (see *Tory Press*) issued his ultimatum. Encouraged by the chorus of delighted approval from home, Mr. Snowden goes on standing pat. As time runs on and tempers get steadily worse, the disquieting side of this affair becomes more apparent to many Liberals who, like myself, prefer Mr. Snowden's arithmetic to that of the French. We are wondering, a little uneasily, whether he may not be taking too high risks: whether he may not be a little blinded by the limelight. Those who feel like this have been disturbed by rumours from The Hague hinting that Mr. Snowden is being urged to remain firm by advisers who are chiefly concerned to bring off a national victory in finance. The danger in all this is—and it is surprising that it should ever be suspected of a Labour Minister—that the larger issues of European pacification should be allowed to slip into the background. One cannot help noting that throughout the whole controversy at The Hague little or nothing has been said from the British side about the paramount need always hitherto in the forefront of Labour and Liberal doctrine on reparations. This is, of course, the need of peace and good will as between France and ourselves; the key to general peace in Europe. If Mr. Snowden conceives that the "firm" attitude he has adopted is in the general interests of world peace, he might take a little more trouble to give us his reasons. Let him stick to his point by all means, but without using it to prick a sensitive friend.

Those of us who would put a financial victory, however just, in the second place of importance, were positively alarmed by the statement which Mr. Snowden made last week-end. It was strange language, indeed, from such a source, and inevitably strengthened the suspicion that our Chancellor's head had become a little turned by the adulation of the jingoes. French opinion, already sufficiently inflamed, was further exasperated by this plain intimation that his policy is actuated by considerations of "prestige." The declaration was unpleasantly reminiscent of the language which excited and disturbed the world in pre-war days from the lips of the Kaiser. "The time has come to reassert our place in the world." I know very well what Liberal criticism would have followed in the highly improbable event of such language from Sir Austen Chamberlain. I hope very much that Mr. Snowden will never make us wish for Sir Austen's return. After all, the entente with France is worth something, unless we have all been wrong for years past in regarding it as at the basis of European peace. In short, if this is the New Diplomacy, it rather frightens me, and I applaud the courage of Mr. Brailsford, who alone among Labour journalists, has ventured to point out the dangers of this "downright" handling of a delicate situation. If the Conference fails, Mr. Brailsford asks "who would accept the Labour Government as a leader on the road to peace?" I agree with him that Mr. Snowden has taken risks which may "endanger all the larger purposes of the Government which has so lightly allowed him to stake its great ambitions for a few millions."

* * *

I wish the wranglers at The Hague, and all who take their stand on "prestige" and the assertion of one's place in the world would ponder the immortal words in which Pascal fixed the essence of nationalism:—

" 'Ce chien est à moi,' disent ces pauvres enfants ;
C'est là ma place au soleil ; voilà le commencement et
l'image de l'usurpation de toute la terre."

* * *

The report on Communist penetration of the Trade Unions, which is to be presented to the T.U.C. in September, will probably stimulate the Unions to still more vigorous efforts to free themselves from the foreign virus that is attacking their system. The details illustrate the extraordinary ingenuity of the attackers in the invention of "disruptive" tactics, and their cleverness in camouflaging the campaign. It is certainly news to most people that at least four well-known organizations, on the surface harmless proletarian movements, are really branches of Communist activity. The case of the Labour Research Department, is especially interesting, for, of course, this body is, or was until recently, supported by some very well-known Trade-Union leaders. Mr. Cook signed the last report, but no doubt this will not happen again. Mr. Cook is, from the Moscow point of view, a pervert to respectability. I myself heard Mr. Shaw, in the course of a reported address, state that he resigned from the Labour Research Department as a protest against its taking Russian money. Apparently, the Unions are now pretty confident of the success of the recent "push" against the Communists, who could only hope to "permeate" to any extent while working men were still innocent of what was happening to them. Our Trade Unionists are violently John Bullish in their attitude to foreigners, Russian or otherwise. The Communists have done some of the more confiding Unions some harm, but one would suppose that the Soviet cannot feel pleased with the balance-sheet.

* * *

Liberals in this country have followed with sympathy and some disquiet the news about the English wife of

Professor Rosselli. The report that reached Signora Rosselli's father in this country was to the effect that, following the escape of her husband from Lipari, where the Italian Government herds its political critics, she had been put in prison, and afterwards allowed to go to a hotel, where she was under police supervision. The Italian Embassy here at once indignantly denied that this Englishwoman (she is, by the way, in delicate health) had been "arrested or molested in any way." In reply to a telegram from her father, Signora Rosselli telegraphed that she had been "set free," and her husband in Paris and Signor Turati both maintain the truth of the original statement, which seems to be confirmed by her own words. Even if we allow that the accusation of imprisoning this lady is not yet proved, the action of the Italian authorities in deporting Signor Rosselli's brother is sufficiently illustrative of what goes on in Italy under Mussolini's rule. The brother, against whom no charge has been made, has been simply used as a hostage or substitute for the escaped Professor. The principle in these affairs apparently is if one victim gets away, take it out of someone else. If this is not sheer mediæval tyranny one would like to know what language to apply to it. Professor Rosselli's offence was that he helped the veteran Liberal leader Turati to escape from Italy. Those of us who object to such proceedings are always accused of hatred of Italy. It is a silly accusation. We love Italy, and long to see her cleansed of these stains. We hope that we shall never be driven to compare the masters of modern Italy to the Austrians, against whose tyranny English Liberals worked and fought until Italy was free.

* * *

It is pleasant to find from the report of the National Trust that last year was a time of good progress in saving pieces of England from the sort of "development" which is disfigurement and destruction. I will note two typical successes. One is the remarkable achievement of restoring the solitude of Stonehenge. It is cheering as evidence of the general willingness to help in such things, when the appeal is well made, that over two thousand people sent contributions, large or small, to the fund within three weeks—just in time. Consequently it is possible now to clear away the ugly buildings near the stones. Unhappily, the War Office cannot be persuaded to rid Stonehenge of their vile erections a little further off and so complete the good work. The War Office is an increasing enemy of our amenities. The second excellent thing is the acquisition of several new estates in the Lake District. The Trust now holds twenty-five properties there, including no less than six added last year. Professor Trevelyan's gift of land at Great Langdale comes in time to preserve one of the loveliest of valleys unspoiled. Wordsworthians feel especial gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Simon for giving Cockley Beck Farm, 800 acres of land, at the head of the Duddon valley. The last sonnet of the Duddon series is alone sufficient to make this region precious, and worthy of preservation. The beauty of these additions to our common property is that the farms and fields are to be left just as they are. All that has happened is that the peril of bungaloid invasions is removed for ever.

* * *

It is pleasing to me to read that something is to be attempted at last to protect us pedestrians. When we exercise our undoubted right to use the public highway, the newspapers, moving briskly with the march of motoring progress, borrow an American term of contempt to describe us. We are "Jay" walkers. Far be it from me to irritate the motoring community, of whom I am already sufficiently terrified. There are motorists and motorists, of course. Still official figures cannot be charmed away, and

last year 6,127 persons were killed, and 164,487 injured on the roads. This is "larning" us to be pedestrians. Lord Cecil recently expressed surprise that there is no organization in existence to represent the people who go about on their legs: including, of course, the motorist if and when he walks about. I agree that it is time there was some society to put our case in Parliament and elsewhere when encroachments on our freedom and safety are threatened. It may be inevitable that tramping in the country should become more of an endurance than a pleasure, but there is no reason why it should be allowed to become a positive peril. The car is not content nowadays with the roads: narrow lanes, and even open downs, are invaded, and cars of every variety, from the sort you can put in your pocket to charabancs as big as furniture vans, continually extend the radius of their triumph. Of course, the promoters of the movement are faced with the doubt whether there are sufficient pedestrians left to make it worth while. They are fast buying cars in sheer desperation and love of life.

A correspondent, who takes a somewhat different view from mine, sends me the following tribute:—

"Hail, fearless Snowden, who in time of war
Denounces Jingoism and ingeminates peace;
Yet like a Palmerston, at Europe's bar
Gives *nos chers alliés* not a moment's ease.

Yes, for in time of war a halt to call
Needs all the courage of the stoutest heart,
And some would rather dodge a cannon ball
Than call upon our brave allies to part."

The late Sir Edwin Ray Lancaster, the last survivor of a great race of Victorian biologists, was renowned for his cutting sayings. One story told of him is so characteristic that it ought to be true, if it is not. Once, it is said, he was present when Sir Edmund Gosse announced to a circle of friends: "I've just been travelling with R. L. S." "Oh," said Ray Lancaster, "in the Cevennes?"

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LIMITATION ALL ROUND

SIR,—Should the present Government still desire general disarmament—which seems unlikely now that "prestige" has become the grand desideratum—it is to be hoped that Mr. MacDonald will see to it that the limitation of naval construction goes *pari passu* with a limitation of our modern Chatham's vocabulary.—Yours, &c.,

Charleston, Firle, Sussex.
August 19th, 1929.

CLIVE BELL.

THE YOUNGER LIBERALS

SIR,—Mr. Ramsay Muir's article on the relations between the Young Liberals and the Labour Party is a most effective summary of the points at issue. The General Election campaign undoubtedly served to intensify the differences between the two movements, and hardened the conviction that fusion of the Progressive Parties is impossible of attainment. Indeed, one might well question the definition of the Labour Party as a Progressive Party. Surely Progress, in the Liberal view, consists in the emancipation of the individual: that ideal is threatened as much by Socialism as by Toryism.

My own experience as a Liberal propagandist in an industrial constituency may have some small significance. Election meetings were composed chiefly of working-class people, whose sympathies were for the most part with the Labour Party. Only one political doctrine from our platforms met with anything like a good reception—the New Liberalism. They were not converted on the spot—conver-

sion will be a long and arduous task—but they listened to it with respect. The moral is obvious.—Yours, &c.,

P. W. HOPKINS.

144, West Street, Bedminster, Bristol.
August 17th, 1929.

LIQUIDATED GERMAN PROPERTY

SIR,—The question of our disposal of the surplus proceeds of the private property of German nationals has been much canvassed of late, especially since the appearance of Sir Robert Donald's letter in the *TIMES*, commenting adversely upon our retention of this surplus, which he regarded as wholly unwarranted.

I have been recently discussing the matter with leading representatives of the banking and commercial circles of Bradford, who were unanimously of opinion that any surplus, after our own people's claims had been met, should be handed over to the German owners. It was freely admitted that Bradford had fared better—much better—in respect of debts owing by individual Germans than in the case of the subjects of any of our late Allies. As one prominent Bradfordian expressed it, "When it comes to the question of enemies and allies together—give me the Germans every time." Similar views are also held in Lancashire, for the *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* recently declared that "the sooner all remaining ex-enemy property is released the better, not only for its rightful owners but also for our own honour and credit."

It may perhaps come as a surprise to many of your readers to learn that Great Britain, with her Dependencies, is alone amongst the Allies in retaining the surplus proceeds of German private property after her people's private claims against German nationals had been satisfied. As accounts stand at present, we shall have in hand, when the few claims remaining to be settled are disposed of, a sum of between £10,000,000 and £14,000,000, which, by all the recognized principles of international law, rightly belongs to the owners of the liquidated property.

That we should withhold this surplus, and fail to discharge what all other nations regard as an honourable obligation, is declared by the Young Committee to be indefensible and an obstacle to the restoration of international good will and normal conditions. They unhesitatingly recommend that the liquidation of German private property should immediately cease, and that any such property not yet liquidated should be returned to its owners.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Philip Snowden will find time, in the midst of his preoccupations with the larger question of reparations, to discuss this matter with Dr. Stresemann, and that a settlement will be arrived at which will remove the stigma that has been created by what Germans regard as our lack of good will and good faith. It is not a sufficient answer to the charge of *male fides* on our part, to quote the clauses in the Peace Treaty whereby the onus of compensating her nationals was placed on Germany, because we know that actually she was not in a position to recoup her owners of private property expropriated by the Allies beyond about 10 per cent. of their losses. Moreover, as has been well pointed out, one party, robbing another, is not exculpated merely by enjoining a third to compensate him, especially when that third is unable to do so. Certainly, it was never intended, nor did we as a nation ever contemplate making a profit out of the liquidation of private German property, for, since international law has been established, such property, while naturally subject to restraint of usage during war, has always been held to be returnable at the conclusion of hostilities, together, as Lord Finlay declares, "with any fruits which it may have borne in the meantime."

Other eminent jurists whose *dicta* might be cited in support of Lord Finlay, are Lord Parmoor, Lord Birkenhead, and Viscount Haldane. The general condemnation with which our policy towards enemy private property is regarded, is exemplified in the following extract from an article by Professor Edwin Borchard, of Yale University, in the *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, 1924, Volume 18:—

"It is believed that few provisions of the treaties of peace are more ominous for the future than this measure

for the confiscation of privately-owned property within the jurisdiction. In a day when international business depends upon the mobility of capital as never before, foreign investment and property, which for over a century had been protected by law, must now depend for their security, as in ancient times, upon the preponderance of force. The effect of the revolutionary doctrine adopted at Versailles has not yet been fully realized by the trade and banking community; but it seems quite obvious that there can be no serious reduction in armaments in any independent country so long as this subversive doctrine prevails in international affairs. It is a cancer in the system."

Thus, according to all the best authorities, our attitude is unjustified in law, and certainly it is not conducive to the restoration of those pre-war trade relations which we and our former Continental business friends found to be so mutually advantageous.—Yours, &c.,

19, Holker Street, Keighley.
August 13th, 1929.

A. E. RITCHIE.

THE TRAGIC PICTURE

SIR,—The letters in your issues of August 3rd and 10th from Mr. John H. Harris and Dr. Norman Leys confirm the suspicion that the mantle of King Canute's courtiers has fallen on them, and particularly on Mr. Harris.

Theories and ideals, such as "leaving the native to his land and his family" avail and can avail nothing against the rising tide of development and industrialism in tropical Africa. One may deplore the passing of tribalism and simple communal life, though these formed no perfect Arcady with their tale of orgies, divinations, slaughterings, and mutilations, but no regrets will alter the stern fact that tropical Africa is moving fast towards individualism, and that the young *muntu* (the man in the street of Africa) has no desire to return to the old ways. Nor will regrets stop European development from its persistent advance.

More good can be done for Africa by realizing facts than by painting tragic pictures and suggesting impracticable remedies. Let us listen to Sir James Crawford Maxwell, Governor of Northern Rhodesia—a man trained in the West African school—speaking at Kafue Show, July 9th: "Undoubtedly, great mineral wealth exists and that wealth is going to be developed. This development will mean the employment of large numbers of Europeans and natives. . . . The farmers of Northern Rhodesia can now go ahead with confidence, for the mines within the territory can take all that they can produce . . . the present situation is a Heaven-sent opportunity." (LIVINGSTONE MAIL, July 18th.)

"But," Mr. Harris asks, "what is the place of Government?" The place, or duty, of Government is, first, to recognize as Sir James Maxwell recognizes, that wealth is going to be developed, and will mean the employment of large numbers of Europeans and natives; and, secondly, to profit by the lessons of history and endeavour to mitigate the influence on the natives of this great change from communalism to individualism, from simple village life to large and busy industrial centres, from primitive ideas to an era of machinery, of aeroplanes, wireless, and all the accoutrements of the twentieth century.

It is a stupendous task the guiding of Africa in this era of unparalleled development, and it needs all the energy and brains of all who care for Africa, rather than the vain frittering away of energy in deploring what we cannot prevent. True, progress does not always bring happiness, but no one can stop it, and Africa must be taught to adapt itself, and means must be found to guide "Nature's simple children" in their contact with progress: to avert and counter-balance attendant evils so far as lies in our power, and to lay the foundations of security against such time as the government of our wards passes out of the hands of the British electorate (which in the mass is appallingly ignorant and apathetic about its responsibility) into the hands of the local residents, for this is another tide that no Canutes can stem, though they can by wise action now rid it of its possible dangers.

Tropical Africa cries aloud for a sane and foreseeing policy: it cries, too, for more practical thinking and speaking and less vain efforts at tide-stemming or, in Cervantes' pretty metaphor, tilting at windmills. While the Imperial

Government still holds the reins let it guide progress and not try to impede it. The better it does so the longer will the reins be left in its hands, and the safer will be the ultimate inevitable handing over.—Yours, &c.,

FRANK H. MELLAND.

The Hill, Caterham Valley.
August 14th, 1929.

THE TENPENNY SHILLING

SIR,—In reply to Mr. Cornish, I should say at once that my proposition is not to reduce the value of the shilling to tenpence; there would be no change in the value of the shilling at all were its content made ten pennies instead of twelve. It would still remain one-twentieth part of a £, and so its value would be the same. There would be no change in the standard of value, the £ sterling, which would be worth twenty shillings as now, and not 16s. 8d. as Mr. Cornish seems to think.

It is the penny which would be enhanced in value, for its purchasing power would be greater, and fivepence would buy as much as sixpence does now in all articles of consumption. I think that commodities would soon adjust themselves to the altered value of the penny, so keen is competition and the desire to sell, but postage would cost more, also telegrams, and thus be one means of increasing the national revenue which is greatly to be desired if we are ever to get the income tax reduced and the capital value of the Funds raised.

I do not see how the introduction of a tenpenny shilling in any way approaches a capital levy. I suppose as an investor and with a deposit at my bank I am a capitalist, but I do not fear any shrinkage in the value of my securities or the safety of my deposit because of my proposal. I admit my letters would cost me more, also railway journeys and omnibus fares, but I should be content with that for the sake of the general good, and all the more if it helped to lead to a reduction in the income tax. All taxation should as far as possible be levied on income or expenditure and not on capital, which is more or less confiscation, and, ugly though the word is, it applies, in my opinion, to the death duties.

However, I fear I am now going outside the limits of the subject under discussion, which is the content of the shilling. I hope I have assured Mr. Cornish that with a tenpenny shilling his pounds and his shillings will have the same value as before.—Yours, &c.,

CHAS. ROBERTSON.

Batworth Park, Arundel, Sussex.

ROGET'S THESAURUS

SIR,—Your quotation on page 660 of the full title of Roget's "Thesaurus" recalls to mind the amusing comments that Stevenson wrote on his copy of the 1888 edition:—

"Of making many books there is no end
But Peter Mark Roget is a faithful friend.

"Facilitate, O Peter, the expression of ideas!
Assist me, Mark, in literary composition!
Enlarge, Improve, partly from the author's notes,
O John Lewis, dutiful son of your sire!

"In 1890 I fell to the use of this."

"Here Lies
My Memory."

And he suggested a new sub-title:—

"Or, the Decayed Author's Crutch."

—Yours, &c.,

JOHN D. HAMILTON.

11, Prince's Square, Queen's Park, Glasgow.
August 17th, 1929.

REALITY AND TRUTH IN ART

SIR,—"Kappa," surveying the criticism on the Haig statue, makes the startling statement that art has its *own* reality and its *own* truth. It is not surprising that he is then forced to the conclusion that only the art of Madame Tussauds will satisfy some people.

The serious blemish in Mr. Hardiman's statue is that it does not stand for English sentiment. Every colonel is a good judge of that and is entitled to say so. In Italy he would have taken the statue for granted. His protest may have revealed to "Kappa" that art is not only part of universal reality and truth, but also limited and enriched by national and even local sentiment.—Yours, &c.,

P. WAALS.

Chalford, Glos.

AN ADVOCATE OF TYRANNY

IT is an open question whether a man who desires to study the politics of a foreign country had better go there in person or remain at home and read the *Times* attentively:—

"How well the fop, who's been abroad to Rome,
Excels the fop who only stayed at home."

Personally, I favour travel; but I am convinced that he who goes abroad with letters of introduction to Ministers of State and high officials, goes abroad to waste his time. If you wish to learn from foreigners you must take them off their guard, in country hotels, railway carriages, station waiting-rooms, and cheap cafés.

The subject of my recent inquiries is Fascist Italy: the theatre of my investigations a mountain valley which runs up towards the Lyskamm and the Monte Rosa. The inhabitants of the valley are peasant proprietors, who manage small grazing farms; hotel-keepers of peasant stock; and visitors of the middle class who come up from the plains during the hot months. This peaceful and amiable population is strictly watched. Strong Fascist patrols are stationed in each of the villages on the main road; and a regular post, with a commandant, watches the mule track to the glaciers and the mountain passes.

I never expected to learn much from the peasants; but what I did learn was enough to show me how cautious they are bound to be. A few weeks before, a young farmer, whilst playing a game of bowls, had said to a Fascist militiaman, "You've got a good job and no mistake. You're here to keep order *ordine interno*, and no inhabitant of this valley has been in the criminal courts for over twenty years." A day later the farmer received a formal warning that if he said anything of the kind again he would be sent to Sicily or Calabria on an allowance of ten lire a day. In plain language, he would be ruined. I should add that this young farmer was no quarreller. I played bowls with him when he was not strictly sober, and found that, in this condition, he was a good loser, and a most affable person.

I thought it wiser not to inquire whether the peasants fiercely resented this policing and threatening, or whether they merely grumbled about it; but a chance remark from the *paroccho* suggested that the discontent of his parishioners was a thing to be reckoned with. "My duties are now more difficult," he said to me one day; "for twenty years I was only concerned with infidelity. I had to see to it that the sceptics, agnostics, and freemasons who build villas in this valley did not corrupt their servants. Nowadays I have to keep people from getting themselves into trouble."

The opinions of ordinary middle-class citizens do not, as far as I can discover, differ materially from the opinions of their class in other countries. All to whom I spoke expressed themselves in the conventional newspaper style. Their views were the views of the leader-writers in the Fascist Press. But I had no reason to think that the

convictions of these men were weak or artificial. They were all honestly impressed by the disorders of 1922. I asked the most intelligent of these middle-class business men whether the troubles of those days had not been exaggerated: he answered hotly and with obvious sincerity, "I know well enough that some people have written in that way; but let those who belittle the disorders say how and where they lived in those bad days. If they had been managers of a motor factory, as I was, they would talk differently." My friend was but little impressed by the argument that these disorders justified special and even extraordinary precautions but not a political revolution. "I am no politician," he answered, "and I care nothing if the Press is censored and Parliament is elected by another method. The Government has met us in the matter of passports. I can leave the country when I like for a business visit to France, England, or Germany." After I had listened to about twenty similar statements, I realized that if I was to continue my inquiries usefully, I must do so in the company of persons more interested in the theory, and less in the practice, of government than this excellent motor manager and his friends. By a fortunate chance I was thrown into the company of a young priest, who was visiting his parents in the valley; and he asked me, a few days later, to make a long expedition into the mountains with himself and two friends.

I accepted this most friendly invitation with great pleasure; but I soon discovered that I was a poor companion for these hardy mountaineers. Their climbing speed was terrific. By the end of the second day, I was a beaten man. To start next morning at two o'clock for a long rock climb was simply out of the question. I was only too glad to rest my aching body on one of the hard beds of the mountain Refuge and to await the return of my friends.

When they did come back and saw that I was still very tired, they decided, most kindly, to remain with me until I could walk with pleasure. It was during this wait at the Refuge that I became engaged in the most interesting discussion that I had provoked since my arrival. My three friends were men of very different characters. The leader of the party was a parish priest; he made many shrewd and interesting contributions to the conversation, but they were in the nature of interjections, and I find it almost impossible to reproduce them. Yet his remarks sufficed to make his mental position clear. European morals were steadily and monotonously declining, and modern society was animated by nothing higher than mere good nature.

Don Niccolo was a very learned man; but his standard of knowledge in contemporary affairs was low; for he was one of those who regard the affairs of this world as superfluous vanities.

Don Emilio, the third priest, was by birth a noble. He was, possibly, Don Niccolo's equal in learning; but I never heard him discuss a question by historical analogy, or with the slightest pedantry. As far as I could judge, his opinions upon European politics and morals were the result of an honest and dispassionate examination of facts. It was not his fault that his views upon men and affairs were coloured by strong traditional prejudices. But there was no trace of the haughty aristocrat in this proud, determined man. I never heard him utter an ungenial word to an inferior, and, high noble as he was, he had been terribly hurt that Niccolo had refused to spend some of the holidays with him, on the excuse that he would be ill at ease in the courtly society of Emilio's relatives and their friends.

Don Emilio supported the Fascist system of government because it was an obstacle and a barrier to European social democracy. Of the European system he had no good word to say. It was bad because it was immoral. "By

making all opinions free, you have proclaimed that what is good and what is bad are of equal value. A man may earn a livelihood in the Press or in the Parliament by calling his petty and ignoble interests a liberal principle or a generous idea. When I see Monsieur Briand living in poverty, and democratic Pressmen forming a seminary, I will admit that they are servants of a principle."

MYSELF: "A man does not become a scoundrel by earning his living, and if you wish to coerce opinions you must first erect an impartial tribunal. No man can judge opinions impartially if he has opinions of his own."

DON EMILIO: "The ordinary, practical judgment of a right-minded man is enough. If you can distinguish between opinions incentive to robbery and murder and opinions incentive to generosity and charity, you can distinguish also between all opinions intermediate between these two extremes. The duty of suppressing and combating every tendency to evil is a first derivative of this gift of judgment."

MYSELF: "I understand why you consider the Fascist system of government to be higher and nobler than a system which permits all ideas to clash and bang together like the atoms of the Lucretian system; I understand also that your detestation of ill-doing enables you to distinguish between tyranny and tyranny. But you must admit that if a Government is to be good it must be durable. Can you hope that the Fascist system will endure in the midst of a Europe which will never be converted?"

DON EMILIO: "I admit the force of what you say; but I would remind you that our system is tainted with European poison. The head of the Government is a man representative of the rabble and their lowest vices. Our Duce is a product of the European system; a stonemason who earned his living as a Socialist, and acquired his wealth as a yelling journalist. I admit that he speaks like a clown, and behaves like a bullying artisan; but his vices are the link between Fascist Italy and Briand Europe."

MYSELF: "There may be a link between the two, but the contrast is not the less striking. In any case, when Mussolini dies the link will be severed. Fascist Italy will live precariously if it is then a mere eccentricity in Europe, for I do not believe that there is any analogy to it in Spain, Serbia, or Poland."

DON EMILIO: "What you say is possibly true; but I am not without hope. The result of this present system may be to turn men's minds away from politics; to accustom them to give their representatives an indication of their wishes every five years, and then to think no more of the matter. If the habit is established it will be possible for wise and high-minded men to continue the Fascist system of government indefinitely."

MYSELF: "I agree that good government is assisted by a certain degree of indifference on the part of the people governed. But the standard of indifference which you seem to think desirable must surely be dangerous. Remember that universal indifference is as helpful to counter-revolution as to revolution, to the enemies as to the supporters of your system. I know of nothing which would be of more assistance to a group of desperate and ambitious men. And is it not possible that concerted opposition to Fascist rule is even now gathering strength underground?"

DON EMILIO: "I honestly believe that the Fascist system is safe during Mussolini's life. My priestly duties put me into contact with every class of society, and I cannot think that concerted opposition to the present system is a bare possibility. The working classes are sore about the emigration laws, and everybody grumbles about the taxes, but I cannot see any signs of the kind of discontent which produces a political upheaval. If the regula-

tions about emigrating are modified, the last real, popular grievance will be gone. Those who made a trade out of liberal principles and popular reforms will still hate the present system, simply because it has put an embargo upon their ignoble commerce in generous sentiments, sold at the rate of three hundred lire per column of liberal principle. Their hatred is not dangerous: the flunkies of a fallen monarchy do not as a rule threaten the new dynasty."

I have endeavoured to express the opinions of this most worthy and excellent gentleman as he expressed them to me. I did not hint that I had myself earned income by contributions to a Liberal newspaper. Had I done so, Don Emilio would have laughed, and would have changed the conversation; I should never again have persuaded him to talk freely about Fascist Italy, for he was the most considerate and the most courteous of men. And had I uttered a syllable which would have prompted him to check the candour of his speech, I should have lost an opportunity of listening to the most honest and intelligent man I had met in Italy. He was, moreover, a man well qualified to collect opinions from others, for nobody was ever ill at ease in his company. I know that there is a rule of logic which forbids argument from the particular to the general; and to say that Don Emilio's views were representative of contemporary Italian opinion would be to disregard the rule. But I doubt whether any man, however proud and independent, can be uninfluenced by those amongst whom he lives. If Don Emilio's political opinions are, in part, the product of other men's thoughts and sentiments, they are the product of influences with which an English visitor to Italy is not often in contact. I, at least, thought them as well worth notice as the snows on the Matterhorn or the streets and buildings of Turin.

ARCHIBALD COLBECK.

A DUSTSTORM AT KHARTOUM

THE night before last I crept into my room helped in by a cloud of dust. Dinner was ruined. We always have it outside, and just as we finished the soup, a slight breeze sprang up—knowing what this heralded, we tried to hurry, but before we could finish the meat course, the dust was upon us; we bore it to the end of the course, because dust with meat is not too bad, but the idea of dust and blancmange was too much for even the strongest appetite, so we deserted each to his room to sit it out in solitary silence.

My room is rather bare as we have practically no furniture. I have a few petrol boxes, a small table, and a bed; my chair broke down the day before. The prospect of sitting on one's bed for three hours is not alluring at the best of times, but when you know that at the end of the three hours you will be red all over and half-cooked it is definitely unpleasant.

The wind raged outside as though it was determined to have the roof off so that it might play with us as it liked. All doors and windows were tightly shuttered, and at first one did not notice the dust in the room. I tried to read, but you cannot read when the page in front of you turns a brownish red before your eyes, and your eyes too get full of dust. I tried writing, but this was worse, for not only did the page change colour and my eyes fill with dust, but the scratching that the pen made as it went along the paper, piling up a little heap of sand before it, was unbearable. I returned to the bed and just sat. I glanced at the table, and was surprised to see how thick the dust was where I had not disturbed it, because the room did not appear to be very full of it yet. When you

sit in a room and smoke, you do not notice how smoky it is getting unless you go out and then return. I could not go out and return because it was certainly dustier outside. Under the door there was a reddish wave gradually creeping forward. It was fascinating to watch its progress. Nothing could stop it. Each time I moved, the dust would rise in a little cloud, and by the change of position small patches of my clothes would be uncovered which had escaped the general darkening effect, but they were soon merged into harmony with the rest. After about three-quarters of an hour little muddy rivers began to trickle down my face and neck, and the horrid thought flashed into my mind that it would be impossible to get a proper wash when all was over, if it ever would be over, because the cold water would be hot and all my towels covered with dust. The red wave from under the door had got to about the centre of the room; its symmetry was spoiled as the one edge had come up against my big box where it was piling up a mound. By now my nose, eyes, and mouth were full of dust, it was hopeless trying to smoke because of the dryness of my throat. The dust has a peculiar smell rather like the smell of an old disused stable, not very unpleasant as it is extremely faint, but after a while this, too, is irritating. I got up and walked about. I deliberately spoiled the red wave by pushing it about with my feet, then knocked the dust off some of my books, but these exertions made me so hot that I had to give them up and return to the bed. Half an hour later the wave had recovered its shape and was practically across the room. Everything now was completely covered in dust, and there was absolutely no doubt that the air was much thicker than it ought to be. The wind still came in terrific bursts, but it appeared that there was a longer interval between each than there had been earlier. Eventually the sound of the dust being driven against the window died down, although the wind was still very strong.

I opened the door and went out. The change in temperature was lovely, and when I looked back my room was a sort of reddish brown haze. Outside, the world had the appearance of a person who has just completed a long train journey, dirty and untidy. The street lamps were hazy like the eyes of the traveller. I pulled my bed outside, shook off as much of the top layer of dust as I could, and then went to bed. Next morning I was awakened by the incessant flop of the servants' cloths; they always beat the dust off viciously as though they were taking their revenge for the extra work that these storms bring for them.

Yesterday it blew just an ordinary duststorm most of the day, but towards the late afternoon it cleared off, so we went to the Zoo, where we met — and his wife, who invited us to come and have a drink at their house. While we were sitting with them I noticed a brown cloud creeping up. I did not say anything at first as I hoped it would go away; I knew that it could not, but still I hoped it would. Then I saw a flash of lightning, and now, as there was the remotest hope that it might not be dust I called everyone's attention to it. It was a funny cloud, brown like a "haboob," but too high. So we sat and watched it and hoped. Suddenly there was a puff of wind, we all scurried into the house, each with a piece of furniture. Then the dust came, but not very thick. Someone said he heard rain, and without any ceremony we all got up and went out. It was rain. Only a little, but you could not believe the difference it made. It was fresh and felt clean, so we just stayed out and got wet. It was good rain, it went on most of the night, and although there was pretty nearly a gale blowing there was no more dust.

X.

THE DRAMA

MR. SHAW'S JAM SANDWICH

Malvern Theatre: "The Apple Cart." By BERNARD SHAW.

WHAT G. B. S. is this? Not the sweeping dramatist of "Saint Joan"; not the metabiologist of "Methuselah"; not the philosopher and friend of "Heartbreak House"; not the guide of pre-war days; and not a new Shaw. "The Apple Cart" is a tract on democracy with especial reference to constitutional monarchy; but not a brilliant tract, not an illuminating tract, not a "human" tract, not a tract with much form. It seems as if Mr. Shaw has decided that he has now come to the stage of his career as a dramatist when he can afford to discard the icing and marzipan and currants and give us an undisguised sermon; and it is not a particularly good sermon. I do not mean that I disagree or agree with his conclusions—or such conclusions as he arrives at; that is not a dramatic critic's business, even in reviewing a play that deals solely in ideas. I mean that the ideas are not very striking and not very new, and that they are expressed without the clearness and at the same time without the appeal to intelligence that one has learnt to expect from the man who has rightly called himself a very distinguished dramatist. This, in fact, is a Fairly Intelligent Playgoer's Guide, written without the method of a Baedeker, the attractiveness and charm of a litterateur, or, surprisingly, much of the wit of a Bernard Shaw.

The scene is England some fifty years hence. The government of the country is ostensibly in the hands of a Cabinet of puppets and ninnies; actually in the hands of Breakages, Ltd., a vast all-powerful capitalist syndicate; and potentially in the hands of King Magnus (the one male character in the play who comes near to living, played well, but a *souçon* too quietly, by Mr. Cedric Hardwicke). He knows exactly what is happening, exactly what he wants to happen, and exactly how to bring it about. He twists the Cabinet round his little finger, and does all the real business in private with the Prime Minister. In recent speeches, Magnus has been reminding his people of the power of Royal Veto, and the Cabinet do not like it. They present him with an ultimatum. He must sign an undertaking not to make any more speeches, and not to instigate Press propaganda—one of his monarchic amusements. He is not even to deliver speeches that his Government have written for him, for he has a way of "unrolling a manuscript and winking." He must be a dumb king. The Royal Veto must die a death of oblivion. After hours of argument and discussion and deliberation, Magnus accepts the principle of the ultimatum. Triumph of the Cabinet. But the "governing classes" have long since given up politics for big business. Magnus is the only man left with the combined will and ability to govern. So, purely as a tactical measure, he refuses to sign, explaining that it would be making a promise which in the interests of everybody he could not possibly keep. The Cabinet fall into the trap, and insist on signature. He replies that he will abdicate, become the Member for Windsor, form a party, and later on, when his son as King has occasion to send for a new Prime Minister it may, of course, be the present Prime Minister, or it may. . . . The Prime Minister tears up the ultimatum, and we are back where we started. In the course of the discussion a hundred other subjects are touched on. The most important, which is overlooked by the Cabinet in their struggle with Magnus, is a proposal from America to cancel the Declaration of Independence and become a British Dominion (on condition that Magnus becomes an Emperor: a King is all very well for England, but democratic America must have something grander). Magnus recognizes in the proposal an attempt to submerge England rather than merge America. The Cabinet merely forget it in their frenzied desire to survive. And so on and so on.

Such is the framework of Acts I. and III., and such is the framework of the play. We are mildly interested and not vastly amused. We know no more about democracy than we did before, and we have heard no fresh theories advanced. This is not a festive cake. It is not even a

cake at all, but just dry bread. But between the two slices there is a layer of butter and jam and cream. So little, any, connection has this second act with the rest of the play that, writing less than twenty-four hours after having seen it, I have almost forgotten what it was about. But in it appeared Miss Edith Evans, looking ravishingly beautiful as Orinthia, the King's "favourite," with her "strangely innocent relationship" with Magnus, her mind that is "subtle, as far as it goes," her "self-conceit that is nobler than the vulgar conceit of having done something." In this scene, with Miss Evans's flashing art to embellish it, there is the true Shavian drama at the height of its richness and glory and perversity. But as it appears to me to have nothing whatever to do with "The Apple Cart," I cannot take it into consideration in the play's appraisal. And if it were not for this reassuring scene one might with reason wonder, in woe and sadness, whether Magnus's line, "I'm too old-fashioned; this is a farce that younger men must finish," might not be applicable to Mr. Shaw himself.

MATTHEW NORGATE.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Father," Apollo Theatre.

STRINDBERG'S "The Father" is always a success in London, and now Mr. Robert Loraine has felt himself justified in producing his revival at the Apollo Theatre. "The Father" is an extremely exciting play, and contains none of that rather sentimental rhetoric which often disfigures the third acts of the great Swedish satirist. The play tells, as is now well known, how a wife tries successfully to drive her intellectual husband mad. She ends up calmly triumphant, while he howls in a strait-waistcoat. Strindberg can put a certain point of view with terrific force. He was in revolt against the whole nineteenth century, and, one feels, must have loathed Ibsen with uncontrollable savagery. Mr. Robert Loraine and Miss Dorothy Dix act in effective contrast, and they are well supported by their small company. On the first night at the Apollo the audience was whipped up to a state of enthusiasm rarely seen in the theatre.

"Sun-Up," Little Theatre.

We are glad to welcome Miss Lucille La Verne back to the "Little Theatre." "Sun-Up" was a great success when it last came to London, and this success deserves to be repeated. The play in itself is not much more than melodrama, though the taste is disguised by an agreeable Stevensonian sauce. But the evening is made memorable by the beauty of the production and the acting. The "theatre" does not seem to be present at all. The company has the carriage of a family party engaged on some moral demonstration. This certainly sounds unattractive, but I can think of no better way of describing the sincerity and seriousness, the abnegation of and indifference to applause of all concerned. Nobody who missed seeing "Sun-Up" last time should fail to go now.

"The Middle Watch," Shaftesbury Theatre.

There is, or used to be, a troupe of acrobats touring the music-halls in an "act" which was always substantially the same, though its title varied with the scene. Sometimes it was "Fun in a Bakehouse," sometimes "Fun in a Schoolroom," sometimes "Fun in a Music-Room," but always "Fun." The authors of this play, "Ian Hay," and Commander Stephen King-Hall, have applied the same formula to the Navy and compounded some two hours of Fun in a Battleship. Instead of acrobatics, their medium is that particular brand of farce for which "Ian Hay" has made himself known in a number of other pieces. The humour of this school of dramatic art depends for its situations on much-bowdlerized French farce, and for its plot on a sort of heavy-handed blackmailing of respectable old gentlemen who find themselves innocently embroiled in the antics of a herd of Bright Young Elephants. Thus in "The Middle Watch" we get Mr. Clive Currie, this time as an Admiral, being bullied by his wife and chivvied

by the younger officers of H.M.S. "Falcon" into overlooking the innocent misdeeds of the latter; young women dodging in and out of the Captain's two spare cabins and an intervening bathroom; and, indeed, all the familiar concomitants, *mutatis mutandis*, of the bedroom-crashing and multi-doored sets which were until a few years ago a *sine qua non* at the Criterion Theatre. It is all, in the words of the gentleman who sells the DAILY LIAR in the Strand, "highly comical," and it is also intensely British and respectable. There are certain passages of laborious sentimentality, but if you can stand the clean, wholesome Fun, you probably have also sufficient fortitude to bear with the sob stuff.

Recent Acquisitions at the National Portrait Gallery.

The National Portrait Gallery tends, by its very nature, to be something of a despoiler of æsthetic standards, but if a good portrait need not be a good picture the most abstractedly inhuman man where art is concerned may always go there to enjoy himself, with one eye shut as it were, and there are several pictures which are at least enjoyable among the recent acquisitions, an exhibition of which opened to the public last Saturday. Perhaps the most interesting pictures among these are of Besant and Rice, the dual novelists, by A. J. Stuart Wortley, who has presented them together, looking benevolent and comfortably replete after a good meal; and of Charles Reade, author of "The Cloister and the Hearth," capably painted by "his nephew," Reade. The arrangement of the sitter, at his table in the window, surrounded by homely objects, is naive and charming. Both these paintings have been presented to the gallery by Mr. T. Chatto. Among statesmen there are three Prime Ministers represented. Gladstone, drawn at rest with a book, by Sidney P. Hall; Asquith, painted rather dully by André Cluysenaar, and Bonar Law, sketched in pencil by Miss Agnes M. Cohen. There are also portraits of the First Viscount Haldane and the Fifth Marquess of Lansdowne, by P. A. de László, full of that painter's flashy virtuosity. A welcome addition is the series of pencil sketches by Sidney P. Hall, in the Charles Keene tradition, made for the GRAPHIC newspaper during the sittings of the Parnell Commission in 1888-9, of Lord Leighton, Clifford Lloyd, Beerbohm Tree, Comyns Carr, J. L. Toole, and Oscar Wilde. Professor Rothenstein's "Sir Edmund Gosse" is one of the best of his portrait-drawings that we have seen.

* * *

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, August 24th.—

World Conference on Adult Education, at Cambridge (August 22nd-29th).

Sunday, August 25th.—

Old Bensonians entertain Sir Frank Benson at dinner; Mr. Henry Ainley presiding, Café Royal, 7.30.

Monday, August 26th.—

"Portrait of a Lady," by Mr. S. A. Polley, at the "Q."

Film—"Nothing But the Truth," at the Stoll Picture Theatre.

OMICRON.

LAISSEZ-FAIRE

COILS of gold in the apple spray,
The Father of Critics bade Eve stay;
And her needle dropped at the Serpent's hiss:
"Who doth nothing, doth naught amiss."

Adam is home with his rake and spade.
"How! Is my fig-leaf shirt not made?"
Eve to Adam rehearsed the song:
"Better naked than shirt cut wrong."

Ye who travail with hand or brain,
Sons of Adam, O rest again!
Thus shall the word be approved of men:
"Bury your talents if less than ten."

E. IRVING.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

THE ART OF THOUGHT

M. ERNEST DIMNET wrote quite a good psychological biography of the Brontë family. He now gives us "The Art of Thinking" (Cape, 6s.), the description of which upon the jacket rouses one's highest expectations. In America it has apparently been "a best-seller." There for five months "it has been the rage," and it "promises soon to attain world-wide reputation, since it is being translated into a variety of languages." Professor John Dewey pronounces this benediction over it: "Before a work of art one is likely to be dumb or to indulge only in ejaculations; and when asked why one likes it, to reply, 'Go and see for yourself.' That is the way I feel about this genial and witty book." Well, I have gone and seen for myself, and I do not feel in the least like Professor Dewey. But if you do not like a book, and someone asks you why you do not like it, it is no good remaining dumb or ejaculating or replying, "Go and see for yourself"—if you are a reviewer, at any rate, you have to give your reasons.

* * *

The book's main faults are superficiality and—if one may say so as politely as possible—a certain recurrent silliness. It is no excuse for the author to say that he is writing for ordinary people and trying to teach them the rare and little understood art of thought. The whole point of M. Dimnet is that people do not think because they have never been taught to do so, but allow their minds to meander slipshod through grooves that are silly and superficial. What would people think of a grammarian whose Grammar was ungrammatically written or a moralist whose stories pointing his morals were so dirty that his book had to be prosecuted by the Home Secretary? The first thing one asks of a man who professes to be able to teach ordinary people how to think, is that he should be able to think himself. Unless one had read some of M. Dimnet's other books, one would have doubted his ability. Thought is by no means an easy art, and even to describe what thinking really is is difficult. Mr. Graham Wallas, a year or two ago, wrote a book on the subject, and if anyone wants to see the difference between a good and a bad book on the art of thinking, he should read both Mr. Wallas's and M. Dimnet's. He will not find Mr. Wallas's a very easy book to read, but it will at least give him some idea of what thinking means, and may even set him in the way of learning how to think. He will find no difficulty in reading M. Dimnet, but it is improbable that he will get one-tenth as much out of it.

* * *

M. Dimnet begins with a description of thought. To say, as he does, that thought consists of a suggestion of images or is produced by images, and that the images closely correspond to wishes or repulsions, is superficial, and a very confusing definition for a man who has never before thought about thought. To say, as he does in the next chapter, that "high-minded men and women endowed with warm natures are almost invariably optimistic, even when they realize the rottenness of the world" makes one begin to doubt the quality of the "images" which go to make M. Dimnet's own thoughts. One's doubts increase

when he gets down to his task of giving practical advice to those who want to learn how to think. There is a good deal about concentration; we are only to read the very best books and yet only the books which we take pleasure in reading; we are to read the newspaper with a red pencil in hand and clip out and file what is important; we are to train ourselves to concentrate by writing down the pros and cons when we have to come to a decision. What all this advice and "tips" amount to is not very easy to see, but one gets a vague impression that the way to think is to be continually either clipping and pasting facts, or amassing knowledge, or reading serious works, or "concentrating."

* * *

M. Dimnet hardly seems to be aware of the most important and interesting problem of the art of thinking, a problem which was admirably dealt with by Mr. Wallas. There is no merit in mere thinking, though M. Dimnet seems to be under the delusion that there is. A man who sits reading the *Times* with a red pencil in one hand, a pair of scissors in the other, and a wet towel round his head, and thinks and thinks about Mr. Snowden, M. Briand, Reparations, and the state of Europe, may quite well be in no better condition mentally than the man in an easy chair with his feet on the mantelpiece reading a description of the Test Match or the latest "sensation" in the Croydon mystery. Indeed, the mind of the first man may be concentrating and remain a mere arid waste without anything worthy the name of a thought in it, while the mind of the second man, though on its surface idling among trivialities, may be performing below the surface the last stage in the delicate and intricate operation of creative thought. The real problem of creative thought and of all real, because original, thinking is to balance concentration with complete relaxation. To think about a thing, in the sense of concentration, consists mainly in what Madame de Maintenon described as "thinking attentively about the same thing over and over again." It is nearly always a necessary stage in the process of thought, but it is only a preliminary, a static stage, the stage of the squirrel in the cage. Concentration almost always leaves the mind exactly in the spot at which it started. The moment when the mind moves on to something new, the moment of illumination, comes only when it ceases to concentrate, when it is relaxing in idleness or trifling with futilities. The classical case is, of course, that of Archimedes who solved his problem in his bath, not in his study. But what applies to the thoughts of genius and great men also applies to those of ordinary men in everyday life. No one will learn to think who does not learn how to alternate between concentration and complete mental relaxation. It is a long time since I read Mr. Wallas's book, and I have not got it by me, but, unless I am mistaken, he rightly insisted that one of the evils of English middle-class education is that boys, from the moment that they get up to the moment when they go to bed, always have to be doing something or thinking about something. They are never allowed just to "idle." But no one who has not learnt how to idle will ever learn how to think.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

STRESEMAN

Stresemann, the Man and the Statesman. By ROCHUS, BARON VON RHEINBABEN. (Appleton. 10s. 6d.)

A BIOGRAPHY of Dr. Stresemann has at the present time such evident topical interest and is likely to be so widely read, that it is a pity that nothing better is available in English than this translation of Baron von Rheinbaben's eulogy of his chief.

The author is regarded in Germany as one of Stresemann's closest friends and disciples, and his speeches, which always command great attention in the German Press, are believed to be often verbally inspired by his leader: last year he was a member of his country's delegation to the Assembly of the League of Nations, and there can be no doubt that he has had unrivalled opportunities of studying Stresemann and his policy at first hand.

Yet in spite of these advantages, his book is singularly disappointing. To some extent the blame must attach to the translators who, without making definite mistakes of grammar or idiom, constantly use words and phrases which are obscure in English, and who in their reproduction of Stresemann's speeches fail signally to convey any of the fire or lucidity which must have been present in the originals. But the main objections to the book from the point of view of the ordinary English reader are, first, that instead of attempting to give an impartial estimate of Stresemann's career and gifts, it is designed solely to magnify a hero: and, second, that the standpoint from which it is written is so much that of a man deeply immersed in German party politics, that the larger issues of European statecraft are overshadowed and the narrative tends to lose itself in details of electioneering devices which only those engaged in them can properly appreciate.

So much said, the man and his career remain of such absorbing interest that any book about them is better than none.

Stresemann was born in 1878, the son of middle-class parents living in a suburb of Berlin. To most readers the date will be more interesting than the family: compared with M. Briand and Mr. Snowden, the German Foreign Minister is still a man with a good expectation of life in front of him. At school and university he seems to have been a leading figure among his contemporaries, industrious, romantic, and dashing: he edited a university paper, was chairman of the General Conference of Students' Associations, and finally wrote a thesis, which has often caused him trouble in later life, on "The Development of the Bottled Beer Trade in Berlin."

On leaving the university he found a job as manager of the Association of German Chocolate Manufacturers at Dresden, a position with a grander title than salary and an office consisting of one small room. But it gave him a chance to use his great organizing gifts: Saxon industry was at that time split up into a large number of small concerns entirely detached from each other and without any political influence. Stresemann welded them together into the Association of Saxon Industrialists which is at the present time one of the most powerful employers' organizations in Germany. He obtained direct representation of industry in the Saxon Parliament; and in 1907, at the age of twenty-nine he was elected to the Reichstag.

During the years that followed he gradually increased his prestige in his party, the National Liberal, and in Parliament by both speeches and articles. He was regarded, not unnaturally, as a champion of "Big business," but his political versatility and realism commanded general respect. He met with reverses—in 1912 he lost his seat in the Reichstag and was only returned again in December, 1914, at a by-election in Aurich—but his reputation as an orator and his influence in the country had been carefully fostered in the meantime.

His attitude to the war was marked by violent dislike of England and a determination to fight to a finish. When the Armistice was signed, he opposed the revolution and acceptance of the Peace Treaty, yet with the realism, or, as his enemies called it, the opportunism, which has throughout

marked his career, it was he, as Chancellor, who abandoned passive resistance in the Ruhr, made terms with the Allies, and brought Germany into the League of Nations.

It is difficult in the story as here told to piece together the motives and explanations of all the queer changes of front which this undeniably great politician has made during his twenty odd years of political life; but one achievement stands out as proof of his great ability. He was Imperial Chancellor for just one hundred days: when he took office it was generally believed that his would be the last Parliamentary Government in Germany: the French were in the Ruhr, the mark was not worth the paper on which it was printed. When he resigned on November 23rd, 1923, this was the situation in the words of his biographer:—

"With the opposition of nearly the entire people, Stresemann had set trade and politics going again. The negotiations with France had been set on the right track, a start had been made with the stabilization of the currency, the revolts in the Reich had been put down."

Stresemann's Chancellorship was the turning point in the post-war history not only of Germany but of Europe, and for that alone his name will always be memorable.

Of more recent events, Locarno, Geneva, and Thoiry, Baron von Rheinbaben gives necessarily a more condensed account, and it is impossible as yet to give a verdict on Stresemann's career as a Foreign Minister. But as an aid to understanding his policy and his character and the influence which they must have on present politics this chronicle of his earlier life is full of interest. It would be amusing to make a comparison with another great political strategist: time and again when reading this book I found myself thinking of Mr. Lloyd George.

BASIL MURRAY.

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

The Novels of Captain Marryat. In 22 volumes. (Dent. 3s. 6d. a volume.)

FEW novels as innocent as Captain Marryat's "Peter Simple" are still extant. "The Vicar of Wakefield" deals with innocent people, but "Peter Simple" is ingrained with innocence and as far removed from the modern novel as are the rimes of the mediæval ballad-maker: further removed, for the ballads are full of grimness, and "Peter Simple" with all its bloodshed, imprisonings, feuds, and broken hearts is yet so cheerful a piece of literature that it might be read aloud to children in the nursery as a fitting preliminary to sound and dreamless sleep—and no doubt often was in Queen Victoria's day. Something more than the great shadows of Thomas Hardy and Siegmund Freud lie between us and such lightness of heart. Captain Marryat lived secure within his own stockade, untroubled by that defencelessness against impressions and that susceptibility to ideas which fit a few to write and make many more as unhappy as if they did. No one was ever less of a genius; habit ruled his life, not intuition nor reflection: they say he received twenty-seven certificates for life-saving in the course of his naval career. He wrote a great deal about the sea, but it meant little more to him than it can have meant to the toughest and simplest of his fellow sailors. He regarded it with religious respect, tempered as time went on by familiarity. Of the sea as known to the Anglo-Saxon poets, Herman Melville, Keats, Conrad, or Pierre Loti, he remained in ignorance to his death. Even the size of the ocean seems to have escaped his notice, and in after years his memory would play tricks so strange that even a land-lubber can improve on some of his descriptions. In the well-known scene of the club-hauling of the "Diomedæ," at the height of the hurricane, which is competently and vividly described, the captain addresses the lieutenant "in a calm tone" to the extent of 114 uninterrupted, considered, consecutive words. The storm that is real enough for the reader to appreciate this absurdity cannot have been less real in memory or imagination to the author. He merely lapsed for a moment from any attempt to be true to life; and so he frequently lapses. Yet without its amateurishness and carelessness, and an odd charm inseparable from these flaws, "Peter Simple" would be the dull and worthy

work of a third-class writer. As it is, on this one occasion, Marryat evades all classes. He plays ducks and drakes not only with established realism, but established morality in plot-making, and we freely forgive him everything. The changeling of an Irish peasant woman falls out of a window, killing himself and striking his foster parent down with a fatal apoplexy. So the humble and harmless Peter can become a lord without the trouble and expense of litigation. O'Brien, Peter's friend and hero, deceives poor Ella Flannagan most basely, but his credit is completely restored when we see how shocked he is to discover that she never deserved it. A score more of such incidents might be picked out, but in reading we are carried radiantly over them all by the frankness and buoyancy of the mood of the writer. The narrative neither halts nor ambles nor ramps, it is something spilt out for us, half in generosity, half by accident.

Peter himself, with his great gift for being a butt and a victim, but never a sorry one, is the author's most living and pleasing creation. Marryat made no attempt to describe him with the ill-selected commonplaces which he chose for so many of his characters. Peter plays a minor part or no part at all in many of the best scenes and stories of the book, he becomes familiar chiefly through his naive entrances and exits. The captain and the first lieutenant have been discussing two of the crew, Peter, hitherto unnoticed, standing by:—

"Mr. Simple, what are you about, sir?" said the captain.

"I was listening to what you said," replied I, touching my hat.

"I admire your candour, sir," replied he, "but advise you to discontinue the practice. Walk over to the leeward, sir, and attend to your duty."

"When I was on the other side of the deck, I looked round, and saw the captain and the first lieutenant both laughing."

The accident of "Peter Simple" was never repeated. "Mr. Midshipman Easy" is a far more accountable achievement. Consider the first chapter of "Peter Simple"—Peter's departure, "carriage paid," with his bottle-green and his six shirts; his father's impatience for his dinner ("like all orthodox divines, tenacious of the only sensual enjoyment permitted to his cloth"); and then Mrs. Handycrack, the parrot, and the fried whiting. Dickens might have been more humorous, but scarcely as light and easy. In "Midshipman Easy" the domesticity of the opening scenes is trite and vulgar—Mr. Easy's belated heir, the wet-nurse and her morals, the disciplining of the spoilt child. Nor does it improve very much as it proceeds. It is full of a smugness for which "St. Winifred's" and "Eric" have been pilloried for many years past, and of English far more barbarous than any Dean ever wrote. There is a blessed hardness and sincerity about the modern boy; he is not going to be hoodwinked by Captain Marryat's reputation for breezy sea-stories into swallowing a bumptious bore like Jack Easy.

The twentieth century is too near to the eighteenth century for the stories written expressly for children to get the welcome that they once received. Our parents and grandparents, living in the most domestic era of English history, were not surprised to find Robinson Crusoe rechristened Mr. Seagrave, and supplied with a top-hat and a fainting Mrs. Seagrave (both equally inseparable from Mr. Seagrave); supplied also with four little Seagraves, and as retainers, a black nurse and the faithful Masterman Ready. Many moral lessons, excessively pre-Darwinian in tone, are drawn for little William. Little Tommy is continually naughty in the witless, dreary fashion of the child of Victorian nursery fiction. If "Masterman Ready" measures the mind of the child correctly, then "Treasure Island" is not suitable reading for anyone under twenty. "The Children of the New Forest" is a less unnatural piece of work, concerned more with food and animals than with the Unerring Hand of Providence. In a prosaic way it foreshadows the Peter Pan story and the modern movement to dispense with elders and betters. But as an historical novel it is pitifully tame. Messrs. Dent, in publishing twenty-two volumes of Captain Marryat (two by two, monthly), show considerably more ardour than discrimination. At least

twenty of the volumes are as dead as mutton, and the artificial respiration of advertisement comes thirty years too late.

LYN LL. IRVINE.

THE POEMS OF SIR WALTER RALEGH

The Poems of Sir Walter Raleigh. Edited by A. M. C. LATHAM. (Constable. 16s.)

WHILE admiring the pains with which Miss Latham has repaid the generosity of the Corporation of the City of Wakefield, who enabled her with a grant in 1927 to undertake some work of research, it is difficult not to regret that her capacity for careful and detailed study should have been exercised on a subject that has yielded such barren fruits. The fashion, nowadays, of course, is for *editiones principes* and the like; none of our old authors is now allowed to remain in the quiet grave of an old edition, but must be exhumed and his remains laid bare, and subjected to the keen and greedy examination of the research student. Exhumations are also in fashion, and Miss Latham has conducted an expert inquiry into the scattered remains of the late Sir Walter Raleigh. Her task, it is true, has been a very difficult one, and she deserves much credit for the patience and industry with which she has sorted out all the old bones, and reconstructed from a mass of foreign elements bits of the original skeleton. But what of the results? At the most six poems of any value, if we except the long and difficult "Booke of the Ocean to Scinthia"; and those six poems are already familiar. And yet even they can only be attributed to Raleigh on very slender authority. "What is our Life? A play of passion," for instance, is one of the most commonly found poems in manuscript collections of the seventeenth century; it was obviously extremely popular, but there is no direct evidence to show that it is Raleigh's. And yet in his time, Raleigh was regarded by his contemporaries as one of the greatest poets. By one man at least (Edmund Bolton in his "Hypercritica") he was regarded as the equal of Donne and Fulke Greville. If isolated lines are to be regarded as a standard of comparison, then perhaps Raleigh deserves Edmund Bolton's praise, for in his "Scinthia" there are rare, but dazzling, flashes of beauty, comparable to Donne's:—

"but that the thoughts, and memories of these
worke a relapse of passion, and remain
of my sad heart the sorrow sucking bees. . . ."

But they are too intermittent; the remainder of the poem lies in some dark and confused realm, beyond the apprehension of the senses and outside the scope of a normal intellect. Still, this fragmentary poem does show the trend of Raleigh's mind, and it is some satisfaction to know that there is no doubt that it is his and no one else's, for the manuscript in his own handwriting is still preserved among the Cecil archives at Hatfield. It would seem that he was incapable of any sustained flight in verse; his wings failed him after more than an instant's elevation, and he would not persevere to rise again and further. Rather he ran to prose, and the prodigious and boring marathon of his "History of the World" is really the more characteristic achievement.

As we have said, Miss Latham has produced about as authoritative a text as anyone can reasonably expect, and she has done it with all the care that pedantry exacts. At the end of the book there is a great bin of variants into which the reader can dip if he cares to, but we confess to having been unlucky in the dips we made. The actual text of the poems is kept free from any editorial commentary, but even then it is not particularly pleasant to read, since Miss Latham has chosen to preserve all the awkward and often absurd spellings. Surely the comfort of the reader should be considered in this matter, when the original manuscript is not extant to show how the author wished his words to be spelt. When a text is based on the work of a hurried and not always intelligent scribe or compositor, then an editor should have courage enough to change the v's into u's, and the y's into i's; by doing so he will be blessed by ten thousand readers for every pedant he offends.

ADONAI8

The Life of John Keats. By ALBERT ERLANDE. With a Preface by J. MIDDLETON MURRY. Translated by MARION ROBINSON. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)

Collected Essays, Papers, &c., of Robert Bridges. IV.—A Critical Introduction to Keats. (Oxford University Press; Milford. 2s. 6d.)

"Oh, weep for Adonais! he is dead!"

AND well-meaning enthusiasts continue to retell the story of his life, a life so brief, so frustrated, so perturbed, so full of things which his saner and stronger self would have wished to be "writ in water." The familiar backcloths are rigged up again; the familiar puppets, Leigh Hunt and Haydon, Woodhouse and Bailey, Severn and Brown, Fanny Keats and Fanny Brawne, are trotted out. And the net result is that Keats the phthisical, Keats the infatuated, Keats the mawkish, is obtruded upon our vision, while Keats the poet, but for the wiser piety of Garrod, Bridges, and de Selincourt, might well be forgotten.

Some forty or fifty years ago, when a small group of English critics, including Swinburne and Saintsbury, Gosse and Lang, was devoting much attention to French literature, there was little or no reciprocity on the other side of the Channel, where Shakespeare was a name, where Byron, Scott, and Dickens were known chiefly "in translations, sir, in translations," and where Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, and Coleridge were obscured by the fog which then veiled all but the largest objects in Britain from all but the keenest eyes in France. The case is altered now. French critics of to-day are writing more and better books about our literary heritage than we are writing about theirs. And, as Mr. Middleton Murry reminds us in his interesting introduction, M. Albert Erlande is not the first French writer to devote a monograph to the nursling of Urania's widowhood. M. Lucien Wolff led the way, "and did it very well."

M. Erlande does not aspire to do for Keats what M. Saurat has done for Milton and M. de Reul for Swinburne, and to be the interpreter of his mind and his art. His critical appreciation does not often rise beyond the level of "Keats's deepest conviction was in his 'Odes'; they were inspired by his truest, most profound instincts." But he has a sense of period and a sense of comedy, and his chapters dealing with the heredity and early environment of his subject might be illustrated with reproductions from Cruikshank, or even from Gillray. Mr. Middleton Murry observes truly that "something more readily accessible" than either Sir Sidney Colvin's or Miss Amy Lowell's life of Keats is required. It is; and it exists in the admirable volume which Colvin himself contributed to the English Men of Letters Series long before he wrote the full-dress biography that Mr. Middleton Murry has in mind. But, of course, Colvin never had the inestimable privilege of steeping himself in Miss Lowell's massy tomes—a privilege of which M. Erlande has availed himself with almost too much assiduity!

It is refreshing to turn from biography unseasoned by criticism to criticism uncomplicated by biography. The fourth volume of Dr. Robert Bridges's "Collected Essays and Papers" is devoted entirely to the essay on Keats which he wrote in 1894 and revised ten years later, an essay wherein the most searching textual dissection is combined with a fineness of sympathy and a depth of insight attainable by few critics who are not themselves of the poet's breed. The analysis of "Endymion" will be welcome to many a discouraged reader who has found himself repeatedly bogged on this particular Latmos! But the barriers which Dr. Bridges's new spelling system interposes between his mind and ours are not easy to overclimb. Logically, if not philologically, there may be strong arguments for varying the typographical form of the vowels to indicate their phonetic variations, for lopping off silent terminal "e"s, and reverting to the Augustan habit of representing the past participial "e" by an apostrophe. Yet the effect of the system upon the eye and the brain is oddly disconcerting. When we find an "Indian meyd bewelling her loneliness," and a "saund" in process of "diing away," we are conscious of a jolt and a jar.

And we ask, very respectfully, for whose benefit these innovations were devised? The reader who is in doubt as

to the correct pronunciation of the first vowel in "father" and in "pale," is not likely to divert himself with a book of highly technical literary criticism from the pen of the Laureate; the aspiring self-educator would be more apt to go astray over quantity and stress than over sound. For one good fellow who, on culture bent, would yet speak of his "feyther" as looking "pile," a dozen would describe funereal sights, and lament the vagaries of the weather. For such as these is nothing to be done?

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

FREDERICK POLLOCK THE FIRST

Lord Chief Baron Pollock. A Memoir. By His Grandson, the LORD HANWORTH, P.C., K.B.E., Master of the Rolls. (Murray. 10s. 6d.)

THIS is a brief and unostentatious account of the founder of one of the great legal families of the country, originally written as a pure piece of family history for the benefit of the author's grandchild, and quite naturally after completion presented to the general public. The book is calculated to appeal not merely to the Pollock family (whose prolific ramifications are set out in a tree at the end of the volume), and to lawyers generally, but to all those who take any interest in the intellectual, academic, and political life of the last century. Of this life the long career of Frederick Pollock, scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, Senior Wrangler, discoverer of an error in Newton's "Principia," Fellow of Trinity, Commissary of the University, leader of the Northern Circuit, Chairman of the Royal Commission of 1828 and 1831 "for inquiring into the defects occasioned by time and otherwise in the laws of this Realm and into the measures necessary for removing the same," Attorney-General in Sir Robert Peel's 1834-5 Ministry, and Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, affords a characteristic illustration. The author is content for the most part to let the tale tell itself through the medium of letters exchanged between his ancestor and his tutors, colleagues, friends, and members of his family, or of extracts from the *causes célèbres* in which he participated, himself supplying just so much narrative and information as is necessary to string everything together into a connected whole. Those were the good old days of pedantic pleadings and of meticulous indictments, when Lord Cardigan was acquitted on his trial for murder by duelling in 1841 at the Bar of the House of Lords "because the witnesses failed to prove that his antagonist was known by each of the names, Harvey, Gurnett, Phipps, Tuckett, by which he was described in the indictment; and when at the trial for high treason of John Frost the Chartist, Sir Frederick Pollock himself was able to take the quite substantial point, that the indictment was bad inasmuch as the list of the prosecution witnesses, though delivered more than ten days before the trial, had not been delivered at the same time as the indictment. So far as Pollock's political views are concerned the following passage from a letter dealing with the Reform Bill crisis of 1832 may appear naively refreshing to those who live in an age in which professedly advanced thinkers regard the Labour Party as stodgy and reactionary:—

"I assure you I take a very different interest in public affairs from what I did. I may be in another Parliament, but I think scarcely a third. I consider the constitution is at an end. The Revolution has begun, and practically we are a Republic."

So far as his judicial temperament was concerned Pollock based himself upon a common-sense appreciation of the present rather than on a blind belief in the past, as is clear from the following informal passage in a letter to one of his grandsons:—

"The common law of England is really nothing more than *summa ratio*, the highest good sense—even Parks, Lord Wensleydale (the greatest legal pedant that I believe ever existed) did not always follow even the House of Lords; he did not *over-rule*—(oh, no! *μη γερουτο*)—but he did not *act upon* cases which were *nonsense* (as many are)."

The book is admirably printed, and contains numerous and attractive illustrations.

A MODERN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

A Modern Philosophy of Education. By G. H. THOMSON. (Allen & Unwin. 8s. 6d.)

THERE is one condition on which the contemporary discussion of education can become scientific, logical, lucid, and relevant at all points to human problems. It is that we should expel from the sphere of discourse all concepts that derive from the magical view of man and the universe. There seems to be hardly a single aspect of education, either theoretic or practical, the consideration of which is not confused by the intrusion of the concepts of transcendentalism, hardly a problem the solution of which is not being thwarted by some otiose metaphysical reference. This is the case not only in Europe and America—where the dominant transcendentalism consists of Catholicism and its Protestant variation—but also in the East. Until we have the courage to proceed undeviatingly from the point of view of a rationalist positivism, the articulation of a modern philosophy of education is impossible. And this is true also of the development of education as a practical racial policy. The objectives of education, not as a mere matter of schools or the instrument of the sects, but as the principle of social organization and welfare, cannot begin to be intelligently conceived, unless we decide, for instance, that the theistic cosmology of Catholicism is true or not true. Man, the immortal spirit, for whom his terrestrial career is a parenthesis, and whose instrument is not Science but Sacraments; and Man, the mortal denizen of one of the humblest of the planets, who must fend for himself by the use of his own brains, and science and art, if the life of his species is not to fail;—these two conceptions lead to mutually exclusive systems of values, incompatible in temper and irreconcilable in method. It is because the modern world is lodged irresolutely in the impasse created by these opposing views of man and his destiny, that educational philosophy and practice does not emerge into determinateness and that most of the sayings of professors of education are confused and idle sayings. We must sooner or later decide between the two. The majority of educated people under forty know well which view must inevitably prevail. And when the scientific realist outlook becomes dominant, then education, both as humanist philosophy and public policy will become as exciting as war, and, perhaps, in the form of a planetary campaign, its moral equivalent. That we hesitate to make the choice in so far as it affects public policy, is, in the opinion of many, involving the race in a dangerous loss of valuable time. There is one crumb of comfort, which is that modern progressive communities are finding it a matter of political necessity to model their common system of education on a non-“religious” basis.

Professor Thomson does not take a line; he refers to the dilemma in a vague, unsuspecting sentence or two, and passes inconclusively on. It is not surprising, therefore, that, bereft of an unambiguous major premiss, he cannot see the wood for the trees, and that the book is a rather unilluminating discussion of secondary issues. He says nothing, beyond a sentence, of education as sociology. Reading this book you would hardly realize that in this century the most fruitful and far-reaching development of education is likely to come as a result of conceiving of it not only as a matter of psychology, but also as the essential part of social and political philosophy, and of regarding education as the fundamental principle and educational institutions as the essential material of concrete social organization. You would not be reminded that the integration of modern communities, in all places and at all stages of culture, is likely to come about by organizing them around their educational institutions. Education thus conceived will not be the entity adumbrated in training colleges, but the application, at a maximum measure, of science and art to the life of the individual and society.

It will be seen that the exciting title of this book is not borne out by its contents. The book discusses, frequently with an exasperating tentativeness that simulates scientific restraint, various stock problems of educational science and technique. It summarizes, without any fruitful

criticism, current educational policy. It exhibits very plainly the chronic inability (with one or two exceptions) of the professional educationists of the training colleges and training departments to make any contribution, either of originality or vigour, to contemporary thought on education.

H. M.

WREN'S LONDON

Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England). An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London. Vol. IV. The City. (H.M. Stationery Office. 21s.)

HERE in the guise of a Royal Commission's formal report, is a catalogue raisonné of the historical monuments of the City, itself a monument of erudition and research, a record from which, if all other evidence perished, the archaeologist of the future could reconstruct all that now remains of that once densely populated residential London to whose religious needs over a hundred churches ministered. One stresses the religious side of the ancient city's life, for the “historical monuments” here scheduled are mainly ecclesiastical; the great majority no earlier in date than the seventeenth century. It is really Wren's London that is pictured and described, though here and there some outlying building that escaped, or some crypt that survived, the Great Fire bears meagre witness to the Jacobean, Elizabethan, and mediæval world.

It is to be regretted that so few secular buildings of old London remain to us; but it may be questioned if the Great Fire is as deeply responsible for this as one might imagine. Mediæval London overflowed towards Charing Cross, yet of the palaces and houses that once stood along the Strand nothing remains save the foundations of the Savoy Chapel and a late eighteenth-century Somerset House on the site of the Protector's palace. Why should we expect the mediæval city to have fared better? In this survey the Middle Ages are represented by the Crypt of St. Mary-le-Bow, St. Bartholomew the Great, the older parts of Temple Church, the Hall of Barnard's Inn, the Crypt of Guildhall, and some scanty remains of earlier building at All Hallows, Barking, and St. Helens, Bishopsgate. The only Elizabethan building is the Hall of the Middle Temple; the only Jacobean example is 17, Fleet Street. Here and there a more or less reconstructed Hall of some City Company retains enough of its ancient aspect to suggest a large mediæval town house. The Companies have preserved a wealth of furniture and plate and fittings, all of which is duly scheduled, but even so none is of any great antiquity. Wren and his Cathedral and his churches dominate the book.

If it were true, as unfortunately it is not, that the occasion produces the man, what an illustration in point the Fire and Wren would have provided. Never was opportunity more opportune. Thanks, perhaps, to the fact that Charles II., for all his faults, was a highly civilized person, the man was at hand; and here photographed from this angle or that, as a whole or in detail, exteriors and interiors, we have a record of the stupendous result of his labours. Not even a life-long acquaintance with St. Paul's and the City churches quite prepares one for this gallery of architectural excellences, which are but emphasized by the bald, concise, detailed, technical descriptions of the text. The Commissioners pay just tribute to the Stationery Office for these photographs which are altogether admirable; though, if another edition be called for, it would be a convenience to readers if the 228 plates were relegated to the end of the book. Bound in clusters in the text, with which it is impossible to keep them in strict correspondence, they are something of a hindrance. It is a small fault in an otherwise flawless production, but one nevertheless worth attention.

Apart from the illustrations of buildings, there are many beautiful plates of carving, fonts and covers, plate, iron work, furniture, &c., which greatly add to the value and charm of the record. The value of the work of the Commission was never more clearly demonstrated, and we must all echo the hope of Lord Crawford and Balcarres that the funds necessary to carry on the work adequately and expeditiously will soon be provided.

BOOKMAKING

Twelve Great Ladies. By SIDNEY DARK. (Hodder & Stoughton. 12s. 6d.)

In the Days of Queen Anne. By LEWIS MELVILLE. (Hutchinson. 18s.)

Twelve Portraits of the French Revolution. By HENRI BÉRAUD. Translated by MADELEINE BOYD. (Cayme Press. 15s.)

"THERE are," writes the author of one of these three books, "certain critics who habitually chide me for not doing what, with a full realization of my limitations, I have not attempted to do. I would therefore explain that the following studies are written with the one purpose of affording a measure of entertainment to those comparatively unlearned persons who are eager to understand something of the past, and who are interested in the historic drama of the centuries, particularly as it is the prelude to the drama through which we ourselves are living. And, as always, I have written for the intelligent, but not for the intelligentsia." And there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the Bookmaker, able to roar you a lady (maid or mistress, trollop or termagant) as gently as any sucking-dove, and set before you Twelve Great Ladies as adroitly as Twelve Bad Men, or Dead Queen Anne as Lively Nell Gwynn. Mr. Lewis Melville may well claim precedence as the Old Firm, but Mr. Dark's dexterity is professionally attractive, and if M. Béraud is less certain and smooth of tongue he is entitled to his excuses as a Frenchman come to us by way of America. But though they lack neither skill nor practice in their craft, they are of the guild of those who create not even when they spin, and who cut an old coat apparently with no desire to make it look like new.

For Mr. Dark's excuses, ably though he urges them, are not enough. To have a purpose is one thing: to fulfil it another. A measure of entertainment he may afford, though we cannot imagine to whom, for if his manner is not actually dull, only the very sedate would be likely to deem it lively. But that his studies of Catherine of Medici, Mary of England, Mary Queen of Scots, and so on, leaping from country to country and from century to century until we return to England with Caroline of Brunswick, will cast any light upon "the historic drama of the centuries, particularly as it is the prelude to the drama through which we ourselves are living," can be credible even momentarily only to those who still regard history through old-fashioned spectacles as a succession of monarchs: to claim more for this book than the interest inherent in any series of portraits of famous women is to talk nonsense, and as portraits their defect is that they are in no sense originals. Mr. Dark, like these two other writers, seems to be cutting his cloth according to someone else's coat, and it is the more confusing that he does not often tell us whose. His account of Marie Antoinette is typically kindly, and he notes: "The story that she sent cartloads of French money to Austria is, of course, grotesque." M. Béraud, who is far from kind, writes: "It was learned that not only was Marie Antoinette wasting the public funds, but she was liberally sending them to Austria." The point may not be important, but what does matter is that in neither case is any authority cited to give weight to one statement or the other. The reader has no opportunity to read between the lines, and his opinion must depend upon the book which chances to come his way.

Mr. Lewis Melville is no better from this point of view, and rather duller. Queen Anne is alive! he declares, but he does not convince us. In one hundred well-spaced pages he gives the facts of Anne's life as princess and queen, but at no point does any figure become vital, and this story of a stupid if well-meaning woman grows steadily more and more tedious until the final happy release: "On the following morning, Sunday, August 1st, at 7.30, Queen Anne died." The studies which follow of Lady Masham, Mary de la Riviere Manley, and Susannah Centlivre are more interesting, because not being born to the purple these ladies had to make their way by their wits. The final fifth of the book reprints an "extraordinary pamphlet" account of the brief life of Anne's son—a "historical document," dated nearly a century after the event, which Mr. Melville makes no effort to authenticate.

In the case of M. Béraud, it is the English publisher who

claims that the book gives "an outline of the French Revolution itself, its causes, its procedures, its leaders." Its leaders, yes; its causes and procedure, only fragmentarily and incidentally, and even so a certain degree of knowledge seems taken for granted. There are in fact not twelve portraits, but eight full-length sketches of familiar figures, followed by four chapters each containing several briefer snapshots of minor figures. The translation is mediocre and American. When upon one page we meet Camille Desmoulins denouncing "stool-pigeons," we are not surprised when on the next we find him brandishing "revolvers"!

These three books are indeed neither better nor worse than many of their kind. Why authors write them needs no explanation, but why anyone should pay the prices frequently charged by publishers for the doubtful benefit of reading them is more of a mystery.

BRIDEWELL

Bridewell Hospital, Palace, Prisons, and Schools, 1603-1929. By E. G. O'DONOGHUE. (The Bodley Head. 21s.)

"BRIDEWELL HOSPITAL," writes Mr. O'Donoghue, "was founded in 1553 for the reception of vagrants and homeless children, and the punishment of petty offenders and disorderly women." In this book, the author has completed the history of the institution whose first century of existence he has already chronicled. In spite of a somewhat discursive and picturesque style which is unusual in a sociologist, there is no doubt that Mr. O'Donoghue's narrative is an important contribution towards the study of such problems as crime and pauperism. As chaplain of Bethlehem Hospital, with which Bridewell is intimately connected, Mr. O'Donoghue has acquired an immense store of information which has been added to by research into the archives of the Foundation. And if one may join issue with him for loading his subject with a plethora of detail, it cannot be denied that it renders his work readable to those to whom a less romanticized version of the story would make no appeal. It is, moreover, possible that, by limiting himself to the bald statement of the manner in which Bridewell developed, Mr. O'Donoghue would have been compelled to reject some of the delightful anecdotes with which his descriptions are elaborated.

Mr. O'Donoghue's account of Bridewell illustrates most forcibly the changing methods of successive generations for dealing with the unemployed. Bridewell was erected to stem the tide of vagrants threatening the peace and prosperity of London in the sixteenth century. But in those days there was little distinction between idle beggars and criminals, and Bridewell became a "house of correction and hard labour," a prison as well as a "hospital." Mr. O'Donoghue has many interesting things to say about the penal aspects of Bridewell. During the seventeenth century, a favourite mode of getting rid of troublesome inmates was to transport them to Virginia as indentured servants, and we learn that, as early as 1617, the governors of Bridewell had a scheme for shipping unwanted children to the colonies after a course of training. Bridewell seems to have been the habitual place of confinement of libellers, prophets, and those expressing doubtful opinions on Church or State. Mr. O'Donoghue does full justice to their activities, and has disinterred many a pamphleteer whose works are now unknown, but whose ravings led in the seventeenth century to a bored tongue, a branded forehead, and the Bridewell "hole." After the fire, Bridewell was rebuilt, but it was unable to survive for more than two centuries, when the prison was swallowed up by Holloway. Mr. O'Donoghue has an optimistic chapter on King Edward's School, which still carries on the task of educating and providing work for poor boys. The days when the Bridewell apprentice was the terror of the City shopkeeper are indeed long past.

The book is very well illustrated and the reproductions of old prints, apart from the service they render the text, are of value to all who interest themselves in the past history of London.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

A Greek-English Lexicon. Compiled by HENRY GEORGE LIDDELL and ROBERT SCOTT. Part 4. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 10s. 6d.)

This is Part 4 of the new edition of "Liddell and Scott," which is in the capable hands of Dr. Henry Stuart Jones, assisted by Mr. Robert McKenzie.

The Past and Future Developments of Electricity and Its Bearing on World Peace. By H. G. MASSINGHAM. (Hutchinson. 6d.)

This is the substance of a series of lectures delivered at Brighton by one of the veteran pioneers of electrical science. In simple, non-technical language, it summarizes the history of electric lighting and predicts its future.

AUCTION BRIDGE

By CALIBAN.

POST MORTEM

THE game of Bridge is governed, not only by the rules which the Portland Club, in conjunction with other bodies, from time to time revises, but also by a code of etiquette which is less clearly defined. Every Bridge player knows that it is contrary to the spirit of the game to convey information (whether by implication or otherwise) as to the contents of his hand, to irritate his adversaries by endeavouring to disturb their harmonious relations, or to allow his equanimity to be ruffled by his emotional reactions to the various incidents of the game. Every player, I say, is aware of these things, though he is a fortunate man indeed who can assert that his behaviour at the card table has never fallen short of his highest ideals.

I often think that we might, with advantage, pay more attention than we do to the etiquette of the Post Mortem—that interval of discussion, sometimes friendly, occasionally acrimonious, which normally follows the play of the hand. There are those who hold the view that it would be in the best interests of the game to abolish the Post Mortem altogether. Bridge, they maintain, should be played—as hair should be cut—in silence. But this seems to me to be taking too drastic a view. Bridge is not a business, but a recreation; and to lay down the hard-and-fast rule that conversation is unseemly between the conclusion of one hand and the commencement of the next, would be to deprive it of a part of its social appeal. Moreover, the friendly discussion of an interesting or novel situation, when such arises, is attractive in itself to those who are skilled in the niceties of play. Card games, to my mind, serve three purposes. First, they provide an acceptable framework for social intercourse. Secondly, they are a valuable antidote to the cares of business or of affairs—they allow for that release of the *libido* which, psychologists tell us, is a fundamental need. But, thirdly, they can supply, to those endowed with the "card sense," a genuine intellectual interest. I have read, in the works of Mr. Wells and other social critics, passages dismissing the problems of the card table as beneath an intelligent man's contempt. I differ profoundly from such criticisms. A difficult hand at Bridge may demand the application, simultaneously, not only of the skilled card player's memory and powers of deduction, but also of a knowledge of the theory of chances and of insight into human psychology. For these reasons, an intelligently conducted Post Mortem may be of the greatest interest and value.

A long experience of Post Mortems at the card table has, however, convinced me that, on the whole, they are not intelligently conducted. The following observations, based on personal experience, will meet, I do not doubt, with a sympathetic reception at the hands of many of my readers.

To begin with, the Post Mortem is frequently conducted before there is, properly speaking, any corpse, i.e., as soon as Dummy's hand goes down. It too often happens that the player who eventually becomes Dummy, finding his calling at cross-purposes with that of his partner, initiates a discussion as to what should or should not have been done before the play of the hand begins. This is quite improper. It may be argued that it does no harm, since the declarer is entitled under the Rules to give away to any extent he likes the contents of his hand; but apart from the fact that his doing so spoils the game, the adversaries may well get dragged into the discussion and inadvertently disclose what is in their hands. It should be a scrupulously observed rule

that no comment is made on the calling until after the hand has been played.

The next point—a minor one, yet perhaps worth mentioning—is that, at the end of the hand, the score should be agreed and recorded before any discussion begins. Every day one listens to hectic arguments about the play of the hand, at the end of which there is some quite unnecessary dispute as to the distribution and value of the honours.

Finally, the technique of the Post Mortem itself—assuming that it is generally desired that there should be one—is worth a little thought. My own experience is that far too much time is wasted in discussions of two kinds. First, there are discussions which concern themselves with the elaboration of the obvious. "I had to take you out, partner, as I had eight Hearts to four honours." "I thought I had better double, as I had the Ace, Queen, Knave of their suit." Such remarks as these are simply idiotic, yet one seldom sees a hand played after which none of the four participants delivers himself of some similar pronouncement.

But these comments, if silly, are harmless; the really objectionable contribution to the Post Mortem is the cross-examination, by his peeved partner, of the player who has blundered. "Why did you not go on with the Diamonds?" "Whatever made you trump my Heart?" and so forth. Questions like these, to which the only accurate answer would be: "Imperfect observation, partner"; "Momentary aberration"; or "Lack of skill"—questions like these ought never to be asked. They merely irritate one's partner, embitter one's relationship with him, and tend to lack of confidence and further errors in the future. If one's partner has made an obvious blunder, he is either aware of the fact or he is not. In the former case, there is no point in mentioning it; in the latter case, it is a waste of time to attempt to instruct him during the cross-talk which follows the play of the hand—unless, of course, he regards himself as definitely under instruction. In short, criticism, in my opinion, should always be confined to cases where the critic is himself hoping to learn something from the answers to the questions that he raises. Spleen, didacticism, and a sense of superiority, are out of place at the card table, and the Post Mortem is only acceptable to the connoisseur of Bridge where none of these elements enters into it.

NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

DECCA RECORDS

We have had the opportunity of trying for the first time a considerable number of Decca records. They consist principally of "light" music and dance records, but there are some of a higher class. The quality is fairly good, particularly in the low-priced records. They are nearly always clear, if they tend sometimes to harshness. The best of the records submitted to us is Delius's "Sea Drift," sung by Roy Henderson, baritone, and the New English Symphony Choir, accompanied by the New English Symphony Orchestra (Three 12-in. records. S10010-2). The solo part and the orchestra are quite fair, though the chorus is at times somewhat muddy.

The best of the August issues are Parry's Choral Prelude on Old 104 and Chorale Prelude on Martyrdom, organ solo by Arnold Goldsbrough (10-in. record. M19. 3s.); Coleridge-Taylor's Dream Dances, 1, 2, and 3, played by the Hastings Municipal Orchestra (Two 10-in. records. M11 and M16. 3s.), and "None shall sleep to-night," from Puccini's "Turandot," and "Let her believe," from his "Girl of the Golden West" (M48. 3s.). Mr. Dale Smith, baritone, sings adequately Elgar's "Fate's Discourtesy" and "The Sweepers" (M46. 3s.), but "Fringes of the Fleet" from which these songs are taken shows the composer at his worst.

Among the light vocal records the best is two Yiddish songs sung by Solomon Stramer, who has an excellent tenor voice (M7. 3s.). Stainless Stephen sings two comic songs, "Back to those pre-war days" and "The Rhyme of a Radio Comedian" (M47. 3s.), and Barrie Oliver, a "rhythm singer," "Mean to me" and "Susiana" (M50. 3s.). Herbert Jäger and his Orchestra provide light orchestral music in "Am I Blue" and "Lady Divine" (M51. 3s.), and "Lucky Boy" and "Florida by the Sea" from "The Cocoanuts" (M52. 3s.).

A feature of the Decca productions is their 2s. records. Among these are: "Russian Romance and Dance," by Rutolda, and Durand's "Waltz No. 1," played on the Cimbalon by Vladescu (F1505), and "Cohen owes me 97 dollars" and "Becky from Babylon" sung by Estelle Rose (E1506).



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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

FAIR PLAY FOR THE GOLD STANDARD—TIN—SHELL UNION PREFERRED

RARELY has an August been so exciting for the City. The "attack" on sterling was renewed this week with the utmost ferocity. On Monday, France "captured" £1,000,000 gold from the Bank, and Germany some £700,000. Another £1,000,000 was lost on Wednesday. The Bank's losses since June 18th now come to £25½ millions. As the Governor intimated last week to the discount market, the Bank may hold out for the remainder of the month without resorting to the weapon of a 6½ per cent. or 7 per cent. Bank rate, but the struggle becomes more desperate each week. The City can earn its commissions irrespective of a high Bank rate—and it is making handsome profits, directly and indirectly, out of the boom on the New York Stock Exchange—but what of trade and industry? It is good to find the cause of merchants and manufacturers being championed by one of the leading private banks in the City—Messrs. J. Henry Schröder. In their "Quarterly Review" Messrs. Schröder rightly complain that the business world is suffering from "untimely gold movements . . . carried out in an illogical manner. . . . If gold were needed for reinforcing the basis of credit or for any other reasonable purpose by the countries that have been drawing on London's stock, no one would have cause of complaint; but when this is not so . . . discontent is natural and general."

What Messrs. Schröder, and, of course, the City, want to see is fair play for the gold standard. With studied moderation they suggest that "co-operation among the central banks, of which so much was heard not long ago, has not been lately apparent in its effect upon monetary movements." The chief villains in the piece are, of course, the U.S. Federal Reserve authorities. They have deliberately reversed the policy, fixed at a conference of central banks in New York in 1927, which, by lowering Federal Reserve rates, had had the effect of redistributing more than £100 millions of America's excessive gold stock among other countries. Dearer Federal Reserve money has caused in the first half of this year more than a third of these £100 millions of gold to flow back to America. Why should American bankers, confronted with the problem of excessive speculation in Wall Street, have adopted a policy which brought gold to America when the effect of gold imports was more likely to encourage speculation than to check it? Why should these gold imports be "neutralized" instead of being allowed to have their natural effect of lowering money rates? Are the Federal Reserve authorities afraid of inflation? There is no sign of incipient inflation in commodity prices, and if there is inflation in security prices, it will be corrected sooner or later in stock market reactions. It is obvious that Mr. Snowden, on leaving The Hague, should address some plain words to American bankers.

While the Federal Reserve authorities have deliberately reversed the co-operative policy that brought good results in 1927-28, Messrs. Schröder would not absolve the German and French central banks from blame. Germany—they argue—though her obvious need is not gold but foreign currencies, has continued to inflict upon her traders a high Bank rate and to maintain it in spite of the fact that its maintenance was dragging in gold to the Bank's ultimate loss (foreign exchange balances being more remunerative

than excessive gold holdings). France, on the other hand, with a 3½ per cent. Bank rate, with 37 milliards of francs in gold (more than double the gold stock of the Bank of England) and 26 milliards of foreign assets, has imposed such charges and restrictions on foreign lending that the rules of the gold standard no longer work. Messrs. Schröder are not alarmists, but they fairly point out the dangers to the business world if the gold standard is discredited before an efficient substitute is found. If America continues its "neutralizing" policy and France and Germany their policy of hoarding gold, the business world will certainly "lend an ear to critics of the gold standard." If Mr. Snowden would only speak out on behalf of Britain to the central banks of these Great Powers, we suggest that he should borrow Mr. MacDonald's classic phrase and say: "No monkeying with the gold standard."

* * *

The position of tin is worth examining. In the first quarter of this year world supplies exceeded consumption by more than 3,000 tons; and in April the price of tin fell below £200 per ton. At the present time supply and demand are nearly balanced, and the price of tin is steady around £210. According to the figures of the Anglo-Oriental Mining Corporation, which are now regarded as the most informative in the trade, world supplies for the seven months, January to July, amounted to 98,770 tons, and world consumption to 97,868 tons. The feature of the statistical position is the increase in consumption. Taking the seven months' period, world consumption this year is 11.9 per cent. greater than in 1928, while supplies are only 8.9 per cent. more. The tin consuming industries have been making rapid progress, especially the American automobile and canning industries. (The production of American automobiles up to June was—thanks to Ford—45 per cent. ahead of the figures for the same period of 1928.) Even the British exports of tinplate from January to July showed an increase of over 8 per cent., and imports of tin into Germany an increase of 11 per cent. There is, therefore, some basis for the firmer market in the metal. At the same time the British Tin Producers' Association has been formed and is quietly working upon a statistical examination of the position in order to determine its future policy. Finally, rumours of a combination among the big smelters, which will go far to "rationalize" the buying of tin ore and the marketing of the refined metal, are, we hear, not without foundation. The share market seems to be at a right level for investment.

* * *

The Stock Exchange in London has been uninteresting this week save for a spurt in the oil share market. It is curious how quickly this market responds to the faintest hope of industrial salvation. The output of the American oilfields increased last week by 45,500 barrels a day—after a long and steady climb—but the report came over from New York that the operators in Oklahoma were about to reimpose "restriction." Overproduction in the American oil industry will not, however, be cured in a week or a month. Of course, the outlook will sometime change, and in the meantime the patient investor will not do better than buy Shell Union 5½ per cent. convertible preferred stock, which is quoted at about 105. This stock is convertible at its par value into common stock at \$30 up to June 30th, 1932, and at \$35 thereafter up to June 30th, 1935. The shares are now \$28¾, and in view of the continued and rapid expansion of the Royal Dutch-Shell group in America, the shares will probably command a much higher price over the next two years.

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